G A U N T L E T

an original screenplay by Dennis Shryack & Michael Butler

GAUNTLET

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING SHOT - DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAY

Situated on the center divider of the San Bernardino Freeway, CAMERA SHOOTS northward toward the city. Heat and gasoline fumes shimmer in a vaporous plasma; the freeway is clotted with traffic. In the distance, through an umber shroud of smog, we SEE the spire of City Hall.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The Judge's bench is flanked on one side by the Stars & Stripes, on the other by the silk and brocade Golden Bear. A WITNESS holds the stand, giving testimony, as ANGLE ISOLATES a man who rises from the counsel table and strides toward the exit.

His name, we shall learn later, is FEYDERSPIEL.

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

A pair of DEPUTY MARSHALS lounge idly to either side of the massive courtroom doors. They snap to attention as Feyderspiel pushes through, abandoning the courtroom.

Urbane, bespectacled, thirty-five, Feyderspiel advances across the corridor to a phone booth. His rate of speed is neither so marked as to suggest any major calamity, nor so casual as to indicate he has left the courtroom on caprice.

Watching as Feyderspiel sequesters himself in the phone booth, one of the marshals glances at his partner. Surreptitiously fisting his hand at his crotch, he imparts a pumping motion to it -- a mute comment on the masturbatory nature of their routine, or the judicial process in general.

INSIDE THE PHONE BOOTH

Feyderspiel dials the last of the digits, waits. Presently, he cups the mouthpiece, quietly imparts a single cryptic sentence:

FEYDERSPIEL
(into phone)
Our problem's surfaced.

CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM - DAY

The O.S. clatter of typewriters accompanies CAMERA as it moves along a row of spit-shined shoes topped by neatly-pressed trouser cuffs worn by men (unseen) who sit in knock-up chairs arranged along one wall of the room.

HOLD as a pair of down-at-the-heels wing-tips ENTERS SHOT... then WITHDRAW SLOWLY to include a man dressed in an eight-year-old worsted in need of a press. His tie is loosened around his collar; he appears remote and out of place alongside the younger, eager-beaver patrolmen seated in their crisply-pressed uniforms.

Forty-four, his hair grey at the temples and framing a face that bears the scars of compromise like eraser marks of early dreams, BEN SHOCKLEY looks up at the sound of a:

SERGEANT'S VOICE O.S.
Shockley...?

CAMERA PANS with Shockley as he rises, enters the door held open for him by the Sergeant, who shuts it afterward.

INT. BLAKELOCK'S OFFICE - DAY

LT. COMMANDER EDGAR BLAKELOCK looks up from his desk with Shockley's entrance. In his fifties, he radiates a sense of unimpeachable authority, his features inscrutable as a cinder-block wall.

BLAKELOCK
(by way of introduction)
Blakelock. Internal Affairs.

Shockley nods.

BLAKELOCK
(continuing)
Welcome aboard, ahh...Shockley. Ever served with us before?

(NOTE: Blakelock possesses two salient idiosyncrasies. Primary is his pattern of speech -- a disjointed mosaic that represents his thinking. Secondary, but more noticeable, is his voice -- the startling and unearthly basso of a man whose larynx has all but been destroyed.)

SHOCKLEY
Nossir.

Blakelock taps the edge of a manila folder against an open palm.

BLAKELOCK
We...Internal Affairs...considerable responsibility...the watchdog of the department, so to speak...policing the police...so that the need for absolute secrecy is...

SHOCKLEY
I understand.

Blakelock frowns privately as if Shockley's interruption had somehow punctured the balloon of his disquisition. He offers the folder.

BLAKELOCK
Plane tickets...extradite...subpoena. You're flying to Las Vegas...coming back with a...ahh...prisoner for us... whom you will remand to custody at County. Then you'll report, you know, back here, and --

SHOCKLEY
Respectfully, sir -- I work for Metro Squad. Why me?

Blakelock fixes him with the iron-eyed conviction of a general.

BLAKELOCK
Your division commander says you're a man who gets the job done.

Silent, Shockley nods. Then:

SHOCKLEY
Anything I should know about the case?

BLAKELOCK
What it is, is this: a nothing witness for a nothing trial.

Shockley nods again; the dreary nature of the assignment is not lost on him.

BLAKELOCK
That'll be all.

The meeting concluded, Shockley's eyes reflect a dull acceptance of his chore, an habitual veneer concealing his emotions.

Turning, he lets himself out of the office.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - TRAVELING - DAY

Shockley sits in the passenger seat beside MEYNARD JOSEPHSON, who drives. An affable, overweight cop in his late forties, Josie's rough-hewn face appears put together from spare parts, conveys a sense of self-effacing guilt as he guides the car into the crowded L.A. International Airport complex:

JOSIE
Fifteen years on the bricks together, and look what happens to us: I draw a lousy desk job and you get a freebie to Vegas.

SHOCKLEY
(wry)
My big break -- a two-bit witness for a two-bit trial.

JOSIE
Anybody I know?

SHOCKLEY
(glances at extradition papers)
Gus Mally. Ever heard of him?

JOSIE
(shakes his head)
What's the charges?

SHOCKLEY
(resigned shrug)
It's Internal Affairs -- they didn't tell me thing one.

He idly refolds the papers, stuffs them in his coat pocket.

SHOCKLEY
(continuing)
I'm going there, turning around and coming right back. You wouldn't even have time to get laid.

JOSIE
(grins)
You wouldn't have time.
(a beat)
Still getting serviced by that Shirley broad?

SHOCKLEY
Nuh-uhn.

JOSIE
Why not? She had a great ass.

SHOCKLEY
(shrugs indifference)
She was after me for my money.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - SHOCKLEY & JOSIE - DAY

CAMERA PRECEDES THEM toward an embarcation area as they thread their way through the human traffic of the place.

JOSIE
You want me to pick you up? I could have me a few drinks -- stick around till you get back. What's it take, the round trip? Couple of hours? You could have dinner with us.

SHOCKLEY
Not tonight. But say hello to Helen and the kids, okay? -- And thanks for the lift. I know how busy you executives are.

JOSIE
In your ear.

SHOCKLEY
...And congratulations on the promotion.

They pause at the entranceway to the boarding tunnel. Guilty that the fates have selected him in preference to his friend, Josie tries to shrug it off.

JOSIE
Shit, I don't know why they picked me. You and me were partners, for Chrissake.

SHOCKLEY
They picked you 'cause you deserved it.

JOSIE
Ben, I hate paperwork -- you know that. If it wasn't for the family, I'd tell them to take their desk job and shove it.

SHOCKLEY
Quit bellyaching. You're off the bricks. Enjoy.

He starts toward the tunnel.

JOSIE
Hey -- !

Shockley turns back.

JOSIE
(with genuine affection)
We went through a lot of doors together, didn't we? Damn, we had our times.

Separated by ten or twelve feet, Shockley regards his friend with a fond rememberance for things past.

SHOCKLEY
We had our times, Josie.

ANGLE HOLDS on the moment between them. Then Shockley turns into the boarding tunnel.

DIRECT CUT TO:

EXT. AIRSTRIP - LOW ANGLE - DAY

A jet thunders down the runway TOWARD LENS and surges into the air with a deafening ROAR.

CUT TO:

AERIAL SHOT - DAY

CAMERA encompasses a section of the sky at 30,000 feet -- a fleecy tapestry of brilliant white clouds against the celestial blue of the noonday sky. Then ANGLE SLOWLY TILTS DOWN toward the flat, parched, interminable stretch of desert that occupies much of the distance between Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

Arid and monotonous, the sandy no-man's-land stretches off toward the horizon, bisected only by the threadlike ribbon of highway that traverses it -- a slim black line of asphalt uniting nowhere with infinity.

Austere, ominous in its desolation, the landscape appears forgotten by man, abandoned by the gods. The TITLE of the film FADES IN against this HIGH ANGLE VIEW of the desert and the road that traverses it:

G A U N T L E T

HOLD as desired. And then...

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS - "THE STRIP" - DAY - MOVING SHOT

HANDHELD CAMERA SHOOTS from inside a moving taxi. Casinos and

hotels. BLUR PAST as CREDITS ROLL over pulsating neon advertisements for all the pleasures that human flesh is vulnerable to, and then some. And as LAST CREDIT GOES:

EXT. LAS VEGAS POLICE STATION - DAY

as a taxi pulls up in front and Shockley emerges. Paying the driver, he enters the building.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Seated, a big DESK SERGEANT studies Shockley with languid and incontestable aplomb.

SHOCKLEY
What do you mean my man's not here?

SERGEANT
You heard what I said, bud.

The "bud" comes out sounding like "pup", sparking a degree of anger behind Shockley's granite veneer. He flourishes the extradite under the Sergeant's nose.

SHOCKLEY
This is a subpoena for one Gus Mally. This is the address of this jail. Now check again.

The Sergeant's jowls move, transferring something -- a plug of tobacco or a clot of disdain -- from one cheek to the other. He studies his booking sheet.

SERGEANT
Got me lots of fellas here. Got me a Smith...a McNaughton...a Gonzales. Take your pick. Ain't got me no fella named Mally, though.

Snapping the booking sheet from him, Shockley runs his eyes down the list of those encarcerated.

SHOCKLEY
He was supposed to've been arrested this morning...held here for extradition.
(a pause, then)
Shit. Somebody screwed up.

He hands the sheet back to the Sergeant, turns and heads for the door through which he had entered.

SERGEANT
(blithely)
Remember, now, when you get back to L.A. empty-handed -- all I said is I ain't got no guy named Gus Mally.

Shockley turns back to him. The Sergeant grins.

SERGEANT
Augustina Mally, I got -- in women's detention.

On Shockley's look --

CUT TO:

INT. DETENTION CENTER CELL - DAY

The cell is a grey monastic space, bare save for a sink, a commode, and a cot upon which rests a huddled, blanketed form. Shockley and a Chicana PRISON MATRON contemplate the person beneath the blankets.

MATRON
Been spitting up since morning. Looks like she got a fever or something. I call the prison doctor, but he don't show.

SHOCKLEY
(to the blanketed form)
Hit the deck, Mally.

There is no response from the motionless prisoner beneath the blanket.

SHOCKLEY
She eat anything at all?

MATRON
Just a cup of coffee this morning.

Shockley looks around -- sees an empty coffee cup on the edge of the sink. Crossing to pick it up he peers into it, sniffs.

SHOCKLEY
Yeah. Smoked a couple of cigarettes and mixed the ashes in with the java. Old army trick. She wanted to look sick.

He extends the cup for the Matron's inspection. In that instant GUS MALLY erupts from the prison cot -- is halfway through the still-open cell door before Shockley catches her.

MALLY
(yelling)
Let me go! They're going to kill me!
I want a fucking lawyer! Heeeeelllopp!

Shockley drags her kicking and screaming back into the cell, her shrieks ECHOING in the cellblock until he brings his hand across her face with a resounding smack!

She is momentarily stunned by the blow, Shockley preventing her from any further violence by pinning her arms against the wall. We are afforded our first authentic view of her as she recovers.

Though not a woman of classical beauty, she possesses that elusive quality that rivets men's eyes. In her early thirties, her figure has retained the grace and contours of an adolescent's; she projects a self-willed independance as hard as Carrara marble. Her steel-grey eyes fix on Shockley with an innate intelligence that sizes up his entire biography in an instant.

MALLY
Terrific. My life on the line and they send me an on-the-ropes bum.

Like Shockley's, the girl's authenticity is shielded by an icy, street-smart veneer. Still uncertain she will not attempt to escape, he holds her to the wall, fires a question at the Matron:

SHOCKLEY
She have a record?

MATRON
Hooker.

Shockley and Mally size each other up. Then:

SHOCKLEY
(wearily)
We've got a problem, you and me -- we don't like each other but we've got to take a trip together. Now, you can come peaceably or you can be a pain in the ass. But I warn you -- if you mess around, I'll put the bracelets on -- if you talk dirty, I'll gag you -- if you try to run, I'll shoot you. My name's Shockley and we've got a plane to catch. Now, let's go.

MATRON
They're still cutting her papers.

SHOCKLEY
Whaaaat?

(MORE)

SHOCKLEY (CONT'D)
(sharply)
Then tell them to hurry their ass!

The woman scuttles out the door. Shockley heaves a sigh of fatigue, releases Mally.

SHOCKLEY
I'm gonna get some breakfast. Think about what I said.

He turns toward the door.

MALLY
You're a dead man, Shockley.

He turns back.

MALLY
They're going to kill me. If you're with me, they'll kill you too.

Shockley gives her a disinterested look.

SHOCKLEY
Who's 'they'?

She hesitates. Then, quietly:

MALLY
I don't know.

SHOCKLEY
Why are 'they' after you?

MALLY
(a beat)
I don't know.

He nods, bored.

SHOCKLEY
Pack your lipstick.

Turning, he pounds on the door for the warder.

MALLY
(ugently)
Dammit, it's the truth! They've even got a <u>line</u> on it. On <u>us</u>!

Shockley shakes his head.

SHOCKLEY
They bet on a lot of things here. Ponies. Football. The fights. But nobody gives a damn about a lard-ass cop holding hands with a two-bit hooker on Western Airlines.

He hammers on the door again.

MALLY
Shockley...listen to me.

A genuine fear -- fear that hovers close to paranoia -- flickers in her eyes.

MALLY
It's 50-to-1 we don't make it. Ask any bookie.

She studies his face for some reaction -- some hint that he believes her. All she gets is the opaque veneer.

SHOCKLEY
Don't drown yourself in the sink.

The cell door swings open. As Shockley exits --

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS STREET - DAY

CLOSE on a sign that reads: Archie's Sports Book, then ANGLE WIDENS to include the establishment's exterior. It is unobtrusive, run-down, with two small windows bare of advertising. Adjacent to the bookie joint is a seamy diner. CAMERA MOVES to SHOOT through the diner's window. We SEE Shockley seated at the counter, inside.

INT. DINER - DAY

It is mid-afternoon, the place all but deserted. A glass partition separates the diner from the adjacent bookie joint; through the glass we SEE a press of betting customers, HEAR the low murmur of voices.

Alone at the counter of the diner, friendless and aloof, Shockley lets his eyes roam the place as he stuffs the last of a cheese-burger and fries into his mouth, washes it down with coffee.

WAITRESS
More coffee?

A lovelorn woman of forty, she holds the Silex coffee-pot above Shockley's cup.

SHOCKLEY
No, thanks.

WAITRESS
Maybe some pie?

SHOCKLEY
I got a plane to catch.

Rising, he slides a quarter onto the counter, scoops up the check beside his plate.

WAITRESS
No way you'd get me in a plane. Not after the airline pilots I've dated. I wouldn't let those guys drive my car.

SHOCKLEY
(indifferently)
Yeah.

CAMERA TRACKS him to the cash register, the Waitress following on the other side of the counter, prattling on.

WAITRESS
Just last week I was reading this article. It talked about flying. Said we've become just like cattle -- keep trusting our lives to people we don't even know. Like pilots.

She sticks his tab in the cash register, collects his money.

WAITRESS
(continuing)
Said we do it all the time -- and just as often as not, get our heads bashed in like cattle for being so trusting. You ever think about that?

Idly watching the goings-on in the adjacent bookie-joint, Shockley's answer is a disinterested grunt. Undeterred, the woman rings up the total and deposits his folding money.

WAITRESS
Like those pilots I dated? Hell, this article said that half those guys are so snockered they don't even know what button to mash.

Something O.S. suddenly catches Shockley's attention.

HIS POV - THROUGH GLASS PARTITION INTO BOOKIE JOINT

We SEE a large chalkboard high up on one wall, its surface cluttered with the scrawled names of horses and the races they are entered in. At first glance they seem unintelligible... then CAMERA SNAPS IN on the name Mally-No-Show, listed as running in the 10th race at Santa Anita.

The odds read 50-to-1.

WAITRESS'S VOICE
(continuing)
I mean, one minute you're flying at 30,000 feet, the next -- boom! -- you're splattered all over the ground -- somebody's dachsund nibbling at your pancreas.

BACK TO SCENE

Shockley stares transfixed at the O.S. blackboard as the woman hands him his change.

WAITRESS
I mean...flying sucks, if you want my opinion.

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHIE'S SPORTS BOOK - DAY

Grillwork windows line the counter that fronts the bookies' alley which stretches along one side of the room. Bettors queue up there, the chalkboards bearing the Vegas "line" on innumerable events, the ponies predominant.

CAMERA ISOLATES Shockley as he moves up to the grill, his eyes on the chalkboard as an ascetic BOOKIE confronts him at the window.

BOOKIE
How much on what, sport?

SHOCKLEY
Uh, I'm not sure. I...

His voice trails off as a RUNNER erases the 50-to-1 in the "show" slot beside the name Mally-No-Show and chalks in a new set of odds: 60-to-1.

BOOKIE
(impatiently)
Well?

SHOCKLEY
What's the story on that horse there -- Mally-No-Show?

The Bookie casts a routine glance up at the chalkboard.

BOOKIE
Sixty-to-one.

SHOCKLEY
(agitated)
I can read. I mean, what's her record? What races has she run before?

BOOKIE
Look, buddy, I don't know shit from horses. I just put the names on the board. All I know about that one is she opened this morning at 20-to-1 and the house has been raising the odds ever since. The smart dough must figure she ain't got a chance. Now, you wanna make a bet or not?

Shockley shakes his head as he backs away from the window.

SHOCKLEY
No, I...I guess not.

Turning, he walks quickly out of the place.

CUT TO:

EXT. VEGAS POLICE STATION - DAY

Shockley approaches along the sidewalk. About to enter the station, he notices a corner phone booth and pauses. Debating with himself, he finally crosses to it.

INSIDE THE BOOTH - SHOCKLEY

Briefly consulting the phone book, he inserts his dime and dials. Shortly:

MAN'S VOICE
(filtered)
Ed's Pony Book.

SHOCKLEY
(tentative - into phone)
Yeah, I want to check on a horse named Mally-No-Show. You got a line on her?

MAN'S VOICE
(filtered)
Hang on...Mally-No-Show...yeah, we got her. Seventy-to-one.

Stunned, Shockley stares at the receiver.

SHOCKLEY
Seventy? Fifteen minutes ago it was sixty-to-one.

MAN'S VOICE
(filtered)
So? Aren't you glad you waited? But don't stretch your luck. The odds are bound to go down. No filly can be that bad.

Crash! -- Shockley slams the receiver onto its cradle.

CUT TO:

INT. DETENTION CENTER CELL - CLOSE ON MALLY - DAY

looking directly INTO CAMERA:

MALLY
You found out I was right, didn't you?

PULL BACK FAST, revealing Shockley as he paces the cell, disturbed

SHOCKLEY
I didn't find out shit. All I know is there's a horse named Mally-No-Show in the 10th race at Santa Anita, and from the way the odds are climbing, somebody must figure she's gonna drop dead at the starting gate.

MALLY
That's right! -- and this is the gate. Right here. Don't you see? They're saying we haven't got a chance!

SHOCKLEY
For all I know it's a real horse -- just a coincidence -- a fluke --

MALLY
It's not a coincidence! For Chrissake, Shockley -- there isn't any tenth race at Anita!

The information stops him in his tracks. Simultaneously, the

cell door opens behind him, two big PARAMEDICS appearing there.

PARAMEDIC #1
Your wagon's outside.

SHOCKLEY
Did you check on that horse?

PARAMEDIC #2
(nods)
Seventy-five-to-one. Sounds like a real nag.

Shockley's face tightens.

MALLY
(a plea - to Shockley)
Call it off. Leave me be. Go back home. Please.

SHOCKLEY
(ignoring her - to the Paramedics)
We're splitting. Now. One of you, go call Hertz, Avis, I don't give a damn. Have a car waiting halfway between here and the airport. On a side street, with the keys in it. I'll pay for it as soon as she's on the plane.

Paramedic #2 departs to carry out the order as:

SHOCKLEY
(to Mally)
If -- and I say if what you've been saying is true, then somebody out there is betting I can't do my job. Well, they're full of shit.

MALLY
(vehemently)
You crazy, brainless bastard! The people laying those odds will chew you up and spit you out! You're fucking crazy! I'm not going anywhere with you!

She throws herself on the cot, grasping its metal frame in a white-knuckled death-grip. Shockley motions with his head to Paramedic #1. As the two men advance INTO CAMERA --

CUT TO:

EXT. REAR OF DETENTION CENTER - DAY

The rear door of the Detention Center slams open, debouches

into an alley where an ambulance waits, its rear bays open. Paramedic #2 stands beside the open doors as his partner helps Shockley carry a gurney down a short flight of steps. On the gurney, a gag around her mouth, Mally struggles against the leather straps that confine her.

As Shockley and Paramedic #1 slide the gurney into the rear:

SHOCKLEY
(to Paramedic #2)
What's the story on the Rent-A-Car?

PARAMEDIC #2
'75 Plymouth. Blue. License C55205. It'll be parked just off the strip, on Logan.

SHOCKLEY
Who's the driver of this thing?

PARAMEDIC #1
Me.

Slamming the bay doors, they hurry around front. Paramedic #1 slides behind the wheel, Shockley halting Paramedic #2 with an outstretched palm as he opens the passenger door.

SHOCKLEY
Just the driver.

He slides into the passenger seat.

PARAMEDIC #2
But we're a team!

SHOCKLEY
Tough shit.
(to driver)
Move!

He slams the door. With a screech of rubber the ambulance pulls away, leaving Paramedic #2 standing nonplussed in the alley.

INSIDE AMBULANCE - MOVING

as Shockley climbs over the seat, begins untying the gag around Mally's mouth...

SHOCKLEY
(to the driver)
Hit the bells.

The Paramedic flicks a toggle. The siren wails as Shockley removes Mally's gag -- greeted by an instantaneous barrage of invective:

MALLY
Cheap-shot gutless bastard! You really get it off roughing up girls, don't you? Big man! Big .45 caliber fairy!

SHOCKLEY
(wearily)
That's me.

MALLY
You and your shit-head macho mentality! You thickheaded rummy cop! You'll get us both killed before --

Grabbing an oxygen mask, Shockley presses it over her lower face — her further oaths muffled as he turns the valve on the upright tank beside him, holds the mask firmly in place.

SHOCKLEY
Breathe deep.

EXT. STREET - THE AMBULANCE - DAY

Siren wailing, it speeds PAST LENS, Shockley a dark-suited figure hovering over his "patient" in the rear of the fast-moving vehicle.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

Parked at the curb is an unobtrusive blue Plymouth, license C55-205, driverless as stipulated. Traffic moves listlessly on the side street as the ambulance -- siren silent now -- swings INTO VIEW around a corner. The only parking space is diagonally across the street from the Plymouth, and the young Paramedic pulls the ambulance smoothly into it.

INSIDE AMBULANCE - FAVORING PARAMEDIC

He nods at the Plymouth across the street.

PARAMEDIC #1
There she is.

Shockley begins unbuckling the straps that hold Mally down:

SHOCKLEY
Hang a U with it and pull it alongside. I'll get her ready for the transfer.

Killing the engine, the Paramedic hops out, slams the ambulance door, sprints across the street toward the rented car. Shockley removes the final straps from the gurney and instantly pays for his act by absorbing a flurry of blows from Mally's flailing fists.

MALLY
Son of a bitch! To hell with you and the boat you came over on! Go die alone! I'm not getting out of this ambulance!

EXT. STREET - THE PARAMEDIC

Swinging open the door of the rented Plymouth, he slips behind the wheel. As he turns the ignition --

CLOSE SHOT - LOW ANGLE - THE PLYMOUTH

The SCREEN ERUPTS as the car disintegrates in a titanic EXPLOSION.

AT THE AMBULANCE

Fragments of steel and broken glass pepper its sides. Shockley's and Mally's horrified faces stare out the rear window at the holocaust.

INSIDE AMBULANCE

For the first time since we met him, Shockley moves. Whirling from Mally, he vaults into the driver's seat.

FLASH CUTS:

THE KEY twisted in the ignition.

EXHAUST belching from the vehicle's twin pipes.

THE SHIFT LEVER jammed into gear.

SMOKING TIRES as the ambulance leaps forward.

INSIDE AMBULANCE - MOVING

Shockley floors the pedal as he takes the big machine around a corner onto a major avenue.

HIGH ANGLE

Siren screaming, the ambulance weaves wildly through the late afternoon traffic -- cars pulling off at desperate angles to permit its passage.

INSIDE AMBULANCE - MOVING

The outside world BLURS PAST as Shockley gropes beneath his left arm for his Magnum as he drives. He hands the pistol over his seat to Mally without removing his attention from the road.

SHOCKLEY
Here!

Kneeling on the floor behind him, Mally looks at the outstretched gun.

MALLY
What's that?

SHOCKLEY
It's a fucking gun! Take it!

MALLY
(recoiling)
I don't want it.

SHOCKLEY
Take it!

Gingerly, she takes the huge blue-black weapon from his hand.

SHOCKLEY
Aim it out the back window. Anyone follows us, shoot!

She stares at him in horror.

MALLY
You've got to be kidding.

AWAY TO:

EXT. STREET - THE SCENE OF THE EXPLOSION

Gawking spectators cluster in a ragged semi-circle around the demolished Plymouth. The Paramedic's body lies half in, half outside the wreckage, his upper torso charred and bloodied in the smoking ruins of the car.

BACK TO:

INSIDE AMBULANCE - FAVORING MALLY - MOVING

She grips the Magnum unsteadily in both hands, aiming it out the rear window. As Shockley careens around a corner onto a less heavily-travelled sidestreet, she is thrown off-balance. Righting herself, she hollers:

MALLY
Where the hell are you going?

SHOCKLEY
Taking a less popular way to the airport.

MALLY
After what happened back there?! They'll be waiting for us at the airport!

SHOCKLEY
I hope they think we're dead. By the time they sift through that wreckage, we'll be back in L.A.

Mally reflects on his words, weighs her own priorities. Glancing at the gun in her hands, she turns around and aims it at his head.

MALLY
Pull over.

Shockley's eyes slide toward the barrel of the gun which hovers perilously close to his right ear.

SHOCKLEY
I'm doing fifty miles an hour. Until you pull that trigger, I'm driving to the airport.

Mally's trembling hands press the cold steel of the gun against his neck.

MALLY
(desperate)
I mean it. I swear to Christ, if you don't stop this thing, I'll --

Suddenly something punctures the rear window and shatters its way through the windshield, having travelled the length of the ambulance.

MALLY
What was that?!

Shockley's eyes snap to the rear window.

SHOCKLEY
They're shooting at us!

Mally spins toward the rear window.

THROUGH REAR WINDOW

Through the spidery cracks that radiate from the bullet-hole we SEE a black car following not far behind.

LOW ANGLE - THE PURSUING CAR

The speeding black sedan roars OVER LENS.

INSIDE THE AMBULANCE

Mally whirls to Shockley.

MALLY
Stop! It's the police!

SHOCKLEY
It's not the goddam police! Shoot!

MALLY
I can't!

SHOCKLEY
(flaring)
Bitch! You were ready to shoot me!

Another bullet smashes through the rear window, imbeds itself with a THUD less than a foot from where Mally kneels. Grimly, she turns to face the pursuing car.

Steadying the Magnum in her two slender hands, she takes aim and grits her teeth, and -- BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

EXT. STREET - THE SEDAN

The windshield shatters. An iron beast gone berserk, the car swerves wildly from side to side before it leaps the curb, plunges across the sidewalk and ploughs through a vast plate-glass window -- disappearing into the depths of an abandoned GOP recruiting office draped with faded bunting.

INSIDE AMBULANCE - FAVORING MALLY - MOVING

For an instant her face brightens.

MALLY
I hit it!

And then, stricken by the reality of what she has done, her eyes widen with the genuine terror of a child.

MALLY
(a small gasp)
Oh, my God.

Seeing her distraction, Shockley reaches back and in a single smooth movement grabs the pistol from her hands and shoves it into his belt.

With a shout she grabs his arm. The steering wheel spins violently in his grasp.

EXT. THE SIDEWALK

A lone pedestrian walking his dog stares in shock as the speeding ambulance jumps the curb and clips off a pair of light-posts before swerving back onto the asphalt.

INSIDE AMBULANCE - MOVING

In her frantic efforts to retrieve Shockley's pistol, Mally has tumbled into the front seat -- clings all over him as he fights to control their trajectory. In desperation he throws an elbow into her ribcage, slamming her hard against the passenger door. As she strikes it, her hand instinctively grasps the handle. The door flies open -- she tumbles --

Clutching the door handle with both hands, only her feet still inside the car, she hangs there, suspended, her scream drowned by the RUSHING SOUND of tires on pavement as the ground flashes by beneath her.

EXT. STREET - CLOSE ON AN IRON GUARDRAIL

PULL BACK FAST to include the onrushing ambulance, its open door (and Mally behind it) headed straight for the corrugated steel abuttment.

INSIDE THE AMBULANCE - MOVING

Driving with his left hand, Shockley desperately reaches out with his right, grabs the belt of Mally's prison jumper and pulls her mightily back in. Simultaneously:

FLASH CUT - EXT. AMBULANCE

With a sickening SOUND of tearing metal, the passenger door collides with the guard-rail, is ripped wholly and wrenchingly from the side of the ambulance.

INSIDE AMBULANCE - SHOCKLEY & MALLY - MOVING

From the safety of the passenger seat, Mally stares at the gaping hole beside her, contemplating the horror of what might-have-been.

And then, impelled by something deep within the female sensibility, she reaches behind the seat, lifts her handbag onto her lap, withdraws a brush and applies it angrily to her hair, avoiding Shockley's eyes.

Watching her, he shakes his head, bemused -- returns his eyes to the road. A long silence settles between them.

Ultimately:

SHOCKLEY
(grudgingly)
Okay, forget the airport. But I'll be damned if I know anywhere else to go.

MALLY
(routine instructions)
Six blocks down, hang a left. Second house on the right.

She continues running the brush through her hair as he just looks at her.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS OUTSKIRTS - LATE AFTERNOON

CAMERA LOCATES an isolated two-story house somewhere south of The Strip, a relic of architectural times past. Its siren off, the ambulance glides into a decaying garage at the rear...a flat and empty stillness prevailing.

Emerging from the garage, Shockley hastily pulls shut the creaky garage door, hiding the ambulance from view. CAMERA PANS the pair as he follows Mally around to the rear of the place.

ON THE REAR STOOP

as they ascend to the shuttered, curtained rear door. Mally

reaches above the sill, locates a skeleton key with which she opens the door. Shockley, with an anxious glance over his shoulder, follows her inside.

INT. FIRST FLOOR BEDROOM - SHOCKLEY & MALLY - LATE AFTERNOON

A bathroom is visible through an open door to one side, the living room through another. The room itself contains only a bed, dresser, and bedside table -- the absence of the lares and penates of normal living lending an unfinished aura to the place.

Shockley takes it in at a glance, knows what it is.

SHOCKLEY
Who'd need a cathouse in Vegas?

ANGLE SHIFTS to include an old-fashioned telephone on the bedside table as he crosses to it, picks it up, dials.

MALLY
Locals, mostly. Married men cheating on their wives.

There is no shame to her voice -- if anything a note of challenge Their eyes hold briefly before Shockley's call is completed, and:

SHOCKLEY
(into phone)
Yeah, Internal Affairs, please -- Lt. Commander Blakelock.

AWAY TO:

INT. BLAKELOCK'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Los Angeles City Hall is SEEN as a grey spire against the twilight. An agitated Blakelock pulls the telephone to his ear.

BLAKELOCK
(into phone)
Shockley? What the hell is... -- you were supposed to be on the plane fifteen minutes ago!

BACK TO:

INT. CATHOUSE - DUSK

SHOCKLEY
I'm holed up.

(MORE)

SHOCKLEY (CONT'D)
Seems someone doesn't want your 'nothing' witness to testify at your 'nothing' trial. I'm going to need some help if I'm going to get her to L.A. alive. Call the Vegas police -- tell them to send a couple of black-and-whites. I'll use one as a decoy... take the other to the airport.
(a beat - to Mally)
Where the hell are we?

MALLY
203 Rothdell.

SHOCKLEY
(into phone)
203 Rothdell. South side...old two-story place. Cathouse.
(a beat - then)
Of course I'll stay here. Where the hell else can I go?!

He listens to a final admonition, nods.

SHOCKLEY
(into phone)
Yessir.

He hangs up. Mally stands there watching him, seemingly studying him as inwardly she makes a decision. Finally, with a shrug:

MALLY
You win, Shockley. I'm through fighting it.

She moves to the bed, sits beside him. In an unusual display of warmth and friendship:

MALLY
I appreciate what you did back there -- in the ambulance. If you hadn't pulled me back in...

SHOCKLEY
My job is to get you to L.A. in one piece.

MALLY
I know. Still, I owe you.

She stretches out on the bed, her firm breasts pressing against the denim prison jumper.

MALLY
Are you married?

SHOCKLEY
Divorced.

MALLY
Recent?

SHOCKLEY
I forget.

MALLY
Any kids? Family?

SHOCKLEY
What do you care?

MALLY
(simply)
I'm interested in you.

She sits up, smiling, her shoulder touching his as:

MALLY
May I have a cigarette?

He extracts his pack, gives her one, lights it. She cups his hands in hers, continues to hold them as he snaps the lighter shut.

MALLY
(quietly)
You know, every woman's got her 'thing' about men -- something that turns her on. With me, it's hands. Like yours. I love strong hands.

Without removing her eyes from his, she gently places his hand inside her blouse.

MALLY
(a whisper)
Let's. -- We've got time...

Discarding her cigarette in a bedside-table ashtray, she pushes him gently down on the bed, kisses him softly on the cheek... allowing her lips to tease his ear and neck before touching his mouth.

MALLY
(murmuring)
Oh, baby, we'll have a good time... such a good time...

CAMERA FOLLOWS her hand as it moves downward past the Magnum in his belt, caressing his thigh...

MALLY'S VOICE
(seductively)
Oh, baby, you're beautiful...so beautiful. ...Just lie there, baby, mama'll do all the work...

And then, at the apparent height of passion, her hand suddenly darts to the Magnum -- only to find Shockley's hand already there, protectively gripping the gun.

SHOCKLEY'S VOICE
Somehow I get the feeling your heart's not in your work.

TWO SHOT - MALLY & SHOCKLEY

She sits bolt upright on the bed.

MALLY
Bastard!

Angry and humiliated, she turns away. She has used the only weapon available to her, and failed. Struggling to retain her composure she tosses her head haughtily, rising.

MALLY
I just want you to know that even if we do get to L.A., I'm not testifying at any lousy trial.

SHOCKLEY
That's your problem. My job is just to get you there.

MALLY
(whirling on him)
Your job! That's why you risk your neck for something as stupid as this! All you've got is your fucking job!

SHOCKLEY
(bluntly)
I do what I'm told.

She regards him with utter contempt.

MALLY
So does an imbecile. Or a slave.

She moves abruptly away from him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - HIGH ANGLE

We SEE two black-and-white squad cars approaching.

INT. CATHOUSE - FAVORING SHOCKLEY

Phone to his ear, he dials information. FOCUS SHIFTS: through the gauzy curtains of the bedroom window we SEE the two squad cars pull up in the driveway, HEAR their engines quit.

SHOCKLEY
(into phone)
Yeah -- the listing for Western Airlines, please.

He mutters the digits of the airline as the operator rattles them off, notices the black-and-whites outside. Hanging up, he glances at Mally.

SHOCKLEY
Time to go.

Unhurriedly, secure that his reinforcements have arrives, he begins to dial the number he had asked for. Mally looks apprehensively through the curtains at the squad cars. Turning, she indicates the bathroom.

MALLY
Do you mind? Once we're in the air, I'd hate to have you worry that I might jump out the washroom window.

SHOCKLEY
Go ahead.

MALLY
(a parting shot)
Western has a plane leaving every half hour.

She enters the bathroom, closes the door behind her.

QUICK CUT: OUTSIDE FRONT OF THE HOUSE - DUSK

A second pair of squad cars approaches from a different direction. No sirens, no flashing lights -- just approaching.

RESUME SHOCKLEY

Oblivious to the newly arriving cars, he speaks into the phone:

SHOCKLEY
Yeah, uh, what's your next flight to L.A.?
(pause - he glances
toward bathroom)
Every half hour, huh?

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - HIGH ANGLE

as the second pair of black-and-whites comes to a stop on the side-street, with the original two SEEN across the road in the driveway.

Now ANGLE SHIFTS AGAIN to include three more vehicles drawing up from yet a different direction: two squad cars and a tactical van.

Doors open, uniformed cops tumble out on the side of the cars away from the house, B.G. ...drawing their guns.

INSIDE THE HOUSE - ON SHOCKLEY

SHOCKLEY
(into phone)
That's confirmed, then. Party of two, leaving in twenty minutes. -- Hah? Oh -- Smith. Yeah...thanks.

He hangs up, glances again through the window at the parked squad cars, then crosses to the bathroom door and knocks.

SHOCKLEY
Let's go.

No answer. He waits, raps again.

SHOCKLEY
Hey...!

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - VARIOUS SHOTS

Cops -- carrying rifles, shotguns, pistols -- crouch behind their cars, using them as cover.

BACK TO SCENE

Shockley twists the bathroom doorknob. It's locked.

SHOCKLEY
Come on, dammit. Open the door!

Abruptly, from outside, we HEAR an amplified --

VOICE OVER BULLHORN
You in the house! Come out with your hands up!

SHOCKLEY
(to himself)
Huh?

He darts to the window, peers out.

HIS ANGLE - LONG SHOT

We SEE four or five of the cops -- heads and shoulders only -- kneeling behind their vehicles, guns trained on the house.

BACK TO SHOCKLEY

He frowns, bewildered. Now CAMERA PANS him away from the bedroom window as he hurries toward the front door.

AT THE FRONT DOOR

Pressing up against the door-jamb, he opens the door a crack and peers out.

HIS POV

We SEE the two black-and-whites and the tactical van parked across the street, commanding a view of the front of the house.

VOICE OVER BULLHORN
The house is surrounded! Throw out your weapons and surrender! Bring the girl with you! You've got thirty seconds!

CLOSE ON SHOCKLEY

Slamming the door, he presses his back against the wall, horror flooding his face.

SHOCKLEY
Fuck me.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - TRACKING SHOT

CAMERA DOLLIES down a row of uniformed cops, guns in hand, aimed at the house. Tense...ready...

HOLD on the two men in command -- a CAPTAIN, bullhorn in hand, and a LIEUTENANT, holding a shotgun. The Captain's eyes are on his wristwatch as he silently counts the seconds.

INSIDE THE HOUSE - THE BEDROOM - SHOCKLEY

He runs INTO VIEW, virtually assaults the locked bathroom door.

SHOCKLEY
Open the goddam door! Those idiots are ready to blow us apart!

BRIEF CUT - OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - CAPTAIN & LIEUTENANT

With a loud metallic click the Lieutenant levers a shell into the breech of his shotgun as the Captain barks into the bullhorn:

CAPTAIN
Twenty seconds!

BACK TO SCENE

Shockley pounding frantically on the bathroom door:

SHOCKLEY
Cunt! Open the fucking door!

Furious, he draws his Magnum, aims it at an angle to avoid hittin Mally within, and FIRES at the lock.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - CAPTAIN & LIEUTENANT

The O.S. SHOT ECHOES as the Lieutenant quickly ducks behind the tactical van.

LIEUTENANT
They're shooting at us!

Pivoting, the Captain shouts to his men through the bullhorn:

CAPTAIN
Open fire!

QUICK CUT - SHOCKLEY

as he bursts into the bathroom only to find it empty. He spins full circle.

Mally is gone.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - MONTAGE - COPS

Surrounding the place, they level a SHATTERING SALVO at the old wooden structure.

INSIDE THE BEDROOM

The ancient curtains are ripped away by a hail of bullets and buckshot that demolishes the windows, peppers the walls.

INSIDE THE BATHROOM - SHOCKLEY

Standing dumbfounded -- alone -- in the tiny space.

SHOCKLEY
(a yell)
Maaaaaaaaallllllyyyyyyyyy!!!!

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - VARIOUS CUTS

as rifle and pistol slugs rip into the flimsy structure in clouds of dust and explosions of rotten wood. Glass shatters as tear-gas canisters are blown through the windows, discharging in muffled WHUMPS inside. It is a holocaust of terrible proportions, clearly intended to destroy all life within. The front porch collapses in a mighty CRASH! -- its supporting pillars splintered by the fusillade.

INSIDE BATHROOM - SHOCKLEY

Bullets thud and ricochet in the bedroom beyond as he desperately grabs faucets, towel-racks (the solitary window, barred and inoperable), anything in his frantic attempt to find the secret of the girl's escape.

IN THE BEDROOM - CLOSE SHOT

A tear-gas bomb impacts against a wall, its acrid grey contents fulminating in a furious cloud.

INSIDE THE BATHROOM - SHOCKLEY

The tear-gas billows around him. Coughing and gagging, he stumbles backward against the bathtub which is set out from the wall a distance of perhaps three feet. As he strikes it, the tub moves -- revealing a small crawl-hole in the floor beneath it and a flight of narrow stairs that descend to the cellar.

Flailing at the tear-gas, Shockley stumbles downward, half falling as he disappears from view.

INSIDE THE CELLAR

A space as large as the entire floor area of the house above, it is sooty and dark. A smoky and deranged intruder, Shockley stumbles INTO FRAME, CAMERA PANNING HIM -- the sounds of his gagging and retching drifting back to us as he vanishes in the darkness.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE

The gunfire continues unabated, the ancient house being literally and systematically blown apart. Flame flickers from the bedroom window Shockley had first peered out. The NOISE is overwhelming.

INSIDE THE CELLAR

Pipes from a vintage furnace range upward like tentacles of a giant octopus, burying themselves into the floorboards above. CAMERA TILTS DOWN to the concrete floor, revealing a grate that has been removed and laid aside, exposing the darker maw of an underground passage.

Shockley lurches INTO VIEW, spots the tunnel-opening, clambers downward.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - FAVORING CAPTAIN & LIEUTENANT

as the Captain bellows into his bullhorn:

CAPTAIN
Hold your fire!

The fusillade dwindles raggedly, an occasional late shot punctuating the stillness that settles. Soon the only SOUND is the savage CRACKLING of the flames that spread throughout the ruined dwelling.

Eyeing his handiwork, the Captain extracts a cigarette, sets fire to it with a lighter, inhales deeply. He intones a dry post-script to the Lieutenant.

CAPTAIN
They should have surrendered.

AWAY TO:

EXT. A CULVERT - DUSK

CAMERA PULLS BACK from the mouth of a large drainage conduit

which empties into the narrow culvert as Shockley lumbers throug this aperture, into the early evening. He pulls up sharply as h sees --

MALLY

A freshly laundered blouse as yet unbuttoned over her bare mid-riff, she is in the act of replacing her prison-denim jumper wit a pair of Levis when she sees him, initially mute with surprise.

SHOCKLEY
(livid)
Why the hell didn't you tell me about that bathtub????

She hastily tugs the Levis up around her lissome legs, CAMERA afforded a brief glimpse of floral-print panties.

MALLY
I'm your prisoner, remember? I was trying to escape.
(briefest beat)
I heard the shooting. What happened?

SHOCKLEY
I was damn near cut to ribbons, that's what happened! Somebody set me up!

MALLY
Well, don't blame me. Calling the cops was <u>your</u> idea, not mine.

Braless, she turns toward him as she buttons the blouse, snaps the pants shut at her waist.

SHOCKLEY
(incensed)
What the hell are you doing? Where did you get that stuff?

MALLY
(points O.S.)
Up there...somebody's clothesline...
(then)
I figured everybody had my description... knew what I was wearing...

SHOCKLEY
(a snarl)
Alright. Forget it. <u>Move</u>.

He pushes her roughly forward.

NEW ANGLE - TRACKING SHOT

They run along the floor of the culvert, CAMERA GOING WITH THEM.

MALLY
Did you shoot at those guys? Is that how it started?

SHOCKLEY
I didn't do jack-shit.

MALLY
Then why? What happened?

SHOCKLEY
I don't know what happened.
(points upward toward the side of the culvert)
Up there!

FROM LIP OF CULVERT - SHOOTING DOWN

as they scramble up the nearly vertical wall of the culvert.

SHOCKLEY
(gasping with exertion)
Is there anyone in this lousy town you can trust?

MALLY
(grim)
I'm not sure...

SHOCKLEY
I guess in your line of work you don't exactly make life-long friends.

Stung, her eyes fix on him as they reach the top and pause to catch their breath.

MALLY
How about you, Shockley? Those were cops back there. How many friends do you have?

Their eyes meet and hold -- Shockley breaking the moment as he prods her forward again.

SHOCKLEY
Get your ass in gear.

With controlled nonchalance he grasps her hand and, together,

they walk down the sidewalk of a middle-income suburban street.

SHOCKLEY
(sotto)
Look normal.

MALLY
I am normal.

HOLD as they walk AWAY FROM CAMERA, appearing to the casual observer no more extraordinary than any other husband out for a stroll with his pretty young wife.

CUT TO:

EXT. A TACO STAND - DUSK

The stand squats on a street corner in the middle of a quiet residential area. The only sign of patronage is a parked Sheriff's car.

ON MALLY & SHOCKLEY

Approaching along the sidewalk, Shockley spots the car. With a quick glance up and down the street he grips Mally's hand and veers across the parking lot toward the vehicle.

MALLY
That's a Sheriff's car, for Chrissake!

SHOCKLEY
Shut up.

AT THE SHERIFF'S CAR - ANGLE ON DEPUTY

A florid man of forty, the DEPUTY slumps behind the wheel of the car, a half-consumed taco midway to his mouth as the blue-black barrel of Shockley's gun pokes INTO FRAME through the window, inches from his face.

SHOCKLEY
Do what I say and it won't go off.

Still clutching the taco, the Deputy's hands rise slowly INTO VIEW, to either side of his head. Shockley shoves Mally toward the rear door of the car.

SHOCKLEY
Get in!

She climbs in back. Shockley moves around the front of the car to the passenger door, his Magnum held unswervingly on the Deputy. Scanning the area to assure himself they are unobserved,

he slides into the passenger seat and slams the door.

SHOCKLEY
(a command)
Go.

The Deputy eases his vehicle away from the taco stand.

DEPUTY
Don't get all nervous now with that cannon, partner. I ain't no trouble.

SHOCKLEY
Twenty of your buddies just tried to blow me to hell. They were nothing but trouble.

The Deputy shoots him a quick look.

DEPUTY
You're two of them that was holed-up in that cathouse, ain't you?

SHOCKLEY
You know about that?

DEPUTY
Hell, every cop in this town knows about it.

SHOCKLEY
What do you know?

DEPUTY
(shrugs)
Dispatcher said there was this hooker and three -- maybe four men, armed and dangerous. Hell, half the units in the city musta tuned in.

Shockley digests the story with a frown. Pulling out his wallet his flips it open to show the man his shield.

SHOCKLEY
I don't know what bullshit story came over your radio, but there was just the two of us in that house and I'm a cop.

The Deputy glances at the badge, snorts.

DEPUTY
Sheeeyit, you think that itty bit a' tin proves anything? You might've got it in a Cracker Jacks.

SHOCKLEY
Look at it. It's real.

DEPUTY
Two fellers in a car said you shot at 'em. You put 'em in the hospital. Now why would a cop do that?

SHOCKLEY
They were shooting at us!

DEPUTY
That ain't their story. They say you was fleeing the scene of an accident... they was just tailin' you when you opened up at 'em.

SHOCKLEY
They're full of shit.

DEPUTY
Sure enough somebody is.

He gives Shockley a sideways glance, returns his eyes to the road. The VOICE of the Dispatcher crackles over the car radio.

DEPUTY
You bein' a cop, you don't mind if I pick that up...tell 'em you're in the car, here, and all?

SHOCKLEY
Don't touch it.

He clicks off the radio, wrests the Deputy's pistol from its holster.

SHOCKLEY
What's your detail?

DEPUTY
You're compoundin' your problem -- kidnappin' an officer of the law. Y'know that, don't you?

SHOCKLEY
What's your detail, cowboy?

DEPUTY
(shrugs)
I got the west side shift -- just cruise. Sundown, I turn in this here car and hang up the hat.

SHOCKLEY
(gestures)
Drive that way -- toward the border.

At the intersection, the Deputy obeys. In a moment:

DEPUTY
Tell you what. I'll make you a deal. If you're really a cop, let's us turn in this little clit, here, to them people what's been lookin' for her, and I'll forget the liberties you've been takin'.

SHOCKLEY
You know who they are?

DEPUTY
Haw?

SHOCKLEY
The people who've been after her.

DEPUTY
(brief pause)
Well now, let's say for the minute your story's true -- 'bout them two dudes in the car shootin' at you first. If them two are examples, I'd say the folks huntin' her would have the initials M.O.B.

The words slam into Shockley's gut like a fist. He whirls angrily to face --

MALLY - HIS ANGLE

She occupies the center of the rear seat, says nothing.

SHOCKLEY
(fiercely)
You didn't tell me that, did you? It was the fucking mob that set the line on us -- kept raising the odds. Who the hell are you protecting?!

MALLY
I'm not protecting anybody! I didn't know!

Her voice is shrill with innocence.

FAVORING SHOCKLEY

He faces front, slumps in the seat.

SHOCKLEY
(flat)
Shit.

DEPUTY
And now you got the cops on your ass, too. The good guys and the bad guys. Twixt a rock and a hard place, that's where you're at. Ain't got a snowball's chance in hell. Nossir.

Shockley sits silently, numbed -- like a man who has just heard his own death sentence.

DEPUTY
(brightly)
So, what do you say, Colonel...? Let's the two of us get a little taste a' her, then turn her ass in. Okay?

SHOCKLEY
(on impulse - points)
Pull over.

DEPUTY
Haw?

SHOCKLEY
Pull over right there!

The Deputy pulls to a stop at the curb beside a pay phone.

SHOCKLEY
Put the cuffs on her. One bracelet on her arm, the other on the roll-bar.

He shoves the Deputy's gun into his belt, pulls the key from the ignition, keeps the Magnum trained on the Deputy's belly. As the Deputy fastens Mally's handcuffed wrist to the roll-bar:

MALLY
(to both - acidly)
Tough guys. Big tin-star egomaniacs.

SHOCKLEY
(ignoring her - to the Deputy)
Now out!

EXT. SIDEWALK - ON SHOCKLEY & THE DEPUTY

The Deputy slides across the passenger seat; the two men get out. Shockley confiscates the handcuff key and pockets it. The Magnum unobtrusive against his belly, he marches the man across the sidewalk and into the phone booth.

AWAY TO:

LOS ANGELES SKYLINE - DUSK

The Prussian blue pall of twilight has fallen, the lights of City Hall glittering against the darkening sky. A telephone rings.

INT. BLAKELOCK'S OFFICE - DUSK

CAMERA CLOSE on a tape recorder, its twin spools turning. Blakelock sits behind his desk, revealed as ANGLE WIDENS, listening to:

FEYDERSPIEL'S VOICE
(from the tape recorder)
I now ask you under penalty of perjury, Mr. DeLucca, whether to your knowledge there are any witnesses who can corroborate what you have told the jury.

DELUCCA'S VOICE
(from the tape recorder)
Well, yessir, maybe. One, sir. One that I can think of.

FEYDERSPIEL'S VOICE
Just one?

Blakelock's intercom BUZZES, and for a moment he is all thumbs as he struggles to shut off the recorder.

SECRETARY'S VOICE
(filtered - from the intercom)
Detective Ben Shockley on line five, Commander. Collect from Las Vegas.

BLAKELOCK
Jeeeesus!

BACK TO:

LAS VEGAS STREET - INSIDE SQUAD CAR - ON MALLY

She sits in the back of the car watching Shockley and the Deputy who are SEEN at the phone booth, B.G. Sensing her fate is being decided, her anxiety reflects itself in her face.

AT THE PHONE BOOTH

Gun in hand, Shockley keeps the Deputy inside the booth as he speaks into the phone which he grips at the end of its steel-clad cord.

SHOCKLEY
(mid-sentence)
-- and I don't give a damn what you've heard, that's what happened, and that's who set me up!
(a beat - angrily)
Proof? Against the mob? Come off it, sir. I've got a scorched ass, that's all the proof I need! -- I'm sitting in the middle of nowhere with a witness you told me was nothing to nobody and the whole town's shooting at me and I'm goddam scared. Now, you've got to bring me in.

AWAY TO:

INT. BLAKELOCK'S OFFICE - DUSK

Blakelock has routed Shockley's call through his intercom; Shockley's voice crackles from the instrument into the office:

SHOCKLEY'S VOICE
(filtered)
Send me an escort. You hear? I want a convoy of California cops to meet me and escort me and my prisoner back to L.A.

Blakelock depresses a button on the intercom, speaks into it:

BLAKELOCK
Where and when?

SHOCKLEY'S VOICE
The State Line. One hour from now. I'll be traveling in a Sheriff's car, do you copy?

BLAKELOCK
Affirmative. You'll have your...the escort. You'll transfer from the, you know, Sheriff's vehicle to an escort car...sixty minutes from now. -- Now can you handle it, or do I have to write it in braille and shove it up your ass?

An empty dial tone hums from the intercom as Shockley hangs up. Blakelock stares at the instrument with dour eyes before he reaches for his telephone, jabs an angry finger at its buttons.

BACK TO:

INT. SQUAD CAR - FAVORING MALLY

as Shockley and the Deputy get into the front of the car. Slamming the door shut, Shockley hands the Deputy the car keys, turns to remove the handcuffs from Mally's wrist.

SHOCKLEY
Take us to the State Line.

DEPUTY
(conciliatory)
Okay, Colonel, now I heard some of that stuff on the phone, and I guess maybe you are a cop, so you know I got to call in at quittin' time -- which it is.

SHOCKLEY
Okay, go ahead. Tell them you need the car another hour. Tell them your mother-in-law was hit by a truck. Tell them anything, but make believers of them.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEVADA COUNTRYSIDE - THE SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Lights on, it purrs down the highway at 60 mph.

INSIDE THE SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

The interior of the car is silent as a coccoon, a glutinous tension prevailing. In a moment the Deputy glances into the rear-view mirror, grins at Mally's dimly reflected face.

DEPUTY
Mind if I ask you a question?

From her silence -- alone in the back seat, a stranger amid strangers -- we sense that Mally knows what's coming.

DEPUTY
How many times you spread your legs in a month?

SHOCKLEY
Just keep driving, okay?

DEPUTY
(ingenuous)
Hey, now, I got me a chance to learn somethin', Colonel. Long's I gotta show-fer the little strumpet, you don't mind if a country boy picks up a little education, do you?

He cackles with delight.

DEPUTY
-- I got this here buddy. He had the idea one time we'd open up a string a' whorehouses 'n' advertise 'em like them fried chicken places -- "finger-lickin' good!"

He leers at Mally in the rear-view mirror.

DEPUTY
(continuing)
How's it work with your kind? You go to some kind of special school?

MALLY
(uninflected)
I have a Bachelor of Arts from Finch College.

DEPUTY
That where you learned how to give head?

SHOCKLEY
(irked)
Will you shut up, for Chrissake?

The Deputy turns cold, hard eyes on Shockley, mocks him with his voice:

DEPUTY
Say now, you comin' to the strumpet's rescue, Colonel? Bet you had idees of gettin' some gash yourself. Maybe you already tasted it, haw? Nothin' like a slice a' damp, is there?

SHOCKLEY
Jesus -- !

DEPUTY
(a wink)
You can't fool ol' Deke. I seen you zippin' your fly.

Revolted, Shockley jams his Magnum in the Deputy's side.

SHOCKLEY
Shut the fuck up! Now!

The Deputy glances at the pistol with disdain.

DEPUTY
You gonna kill a fellow officer, Colonel? What'll you tell 'em back home? -- that I was insultin' your whore?

Shockley will not pull the trigger and both men know it. Their eyes lock with the opaque and menacing challenge of primeval antagonists. Disgusted, Shockley finally looks away, stares through the windshield. Beaming with his victory, the Deputy addresses Mally in a voice low with the syrupy self-satisfaction of a man who has just discovered the secret of erection.

DEPUTY
How do you like that? You done lost your hero-boy.

MALLY
(flatly)
I can take care of myself.

DEPUTY
Bet you can. So let's just you 'n' me have us a little talk, haw?
(beat)
Ever go down on another little girl? Ever had it done to you? Whores don't ball just guys, do they? I mean, you'll make it with anybody's got the cash, right?

FAVORING MALLY

In the act of lighting a cigarette, her innate loveliness is somehow untarnished by his corrosive remarks.

DEPUTY
(taunting her)
Bet you do. Bet I'd like to watch you, too. Yes, ma'am. I could really dig watchin' -- them pretty little melons all pink and tight -- that little ass a-humpin' and a-twistin' -- them long legs all jacked up 'n' juicy-like.

(MORE)

DEPUTY (CONT'D)
I'll bet it don't take much to get your pussy all wet 'n' hot to trot, now, does it? I mean, c'mon -- talk to me. I really wanta know. What's it like, bein' a whore?

Mally's face is illuminated by the coal of her cigarette as she takes a drag, inhales, lets the smoke out. When she speaks, it is without shame or viciousness -- rather, with the calm tones of a princess addressing a leper or a clod:

MALLY
Actually, I always thought it was rather like being a cop.

The Deputy affects a harsh laugh.

DEPUTY
You did, haw?

MALLY
(simply)
Yes. Not unlike your being on the take at two dozen bars in downtown Vegas. Or taking money from the Senator each time you peel his kid's Cadillac off a telephone pole. Or looking the other way when a big-shot gets 502'd — and strong-arming the Chicanos in the barrio on Saturday night. ...Or busting kids for smoking grass, then taking kick-backs from the heroin dealers. ...Or those occasions when you bust a pusher and skim the haul when you've made the collar -- and then sell what you skim to your dope-addict buddies on the force.

CLOSE ON THE DEPUTY

Unnerved but trying to bluff it out, he gives Shockley a forced laugh.

DEPUTY
She's sure onto all our tricks, ain't she?

MALLY

As she continues, her voice -- if anything -- is even milder and less acerbic than before:

MALLY
As I see it, the only difference between you and me is that after I finish work I take a long hot bath and I'm clean as the day I was born. But a cop, especially a Deputy like you -- when the Sheriff whistles, you squat, and what he does to you rots your mind -- and no amount of water on earth can make you clean again.

FAVORING THE DEPUTY

Rigid behind the wheel, he shoots a look at Shockley.

DEPUTY
You gonna sit there and take that shit?

SHOCKLEY
(indifferent)
You asked her to talk.

MALLY

She speaks to the Deputy in the soothing tones of a mother to a child beset by nightmares:

MALLY
I know you don't like women like me. We seem a bit aggressive. We frighten you. But that's only because you've got filth in your brain and I'm afraid the only way you'll ever clean it out is to put a bullet through it.
(a pause - then, pleasantly)
Does your wife know you masturbate?

SHOCK CUT - LONG SHOT - THE CAR

Brakes SCREAM! -- the squad car fishtails madly, swerving in a four-wheel drift into the path of an onrushing semi. The huge truck veers sharply onto the shoulder of the road, horn BLARING -- narrowly avoiding a head-on collision of terrible proportions.

As the squad car jolts to a stop --

INSIDE THE SQUAD CAR

Incensed, the Deputy wrestles with Shockley for possession of the Magnum until Shockley stuns him with a glancing blow from the butt of the weapon.

Cocking the hammer --

SHOCKLEY
You've had your chat. Now drive.

Bleeding from the cut on his head, chest heaving with fury and humiliation, the Deputy wrenches the car back onto the highway, tromps on the gas.

Shockley looks over his shoulder, gives Mally the first affirmative expression we have seen -- a private grin of congratulation.

A moment passes between them, the Deputy's presence temporarily forgotten. Then:

MALLY
(quietly)
Shockley?

SHOCKLEY
Yeah?

MALLY
What's going to happen at the border?

SHOCKLEY
We're picking up an escort to L.A.

MALLY
Who?

SHOCKLEY
Cops. California cops.

MALLY
How do you know?

SHOCKLEY
I asked for them.

MALLY
Did you call the same person you telephoned from the house?

SHOCKLEY
Yeah.

She hesitates. Then:

MALLY
When you escaped...when I first saw you there in the culvert...you said you'd been set up.

SHOCKLEY
Well, yeah, that's what it seemed like at the time.

MALLY
What's changed since then?

SHOCKLEY
I talked to headquarters.

MALLY
...The same people who would have set you up if you had been set up.

Brief silence. Then:

SHOCKLEY
What are you trying to say?

MALLY
Somebody's trying to kill me. And since you're along, you're a target too. Okay, so maybe the car that blew up -- the two men who shot at us -- maybe that was the mob. -- But at the house, those were policemen outside. Somehow, they got the wrong message. Maybe it was a legitimate mistake...maybe not. If it wasn't, who would've given them the wrong message?

SHOCKLEY
(defensively)
Hey, I don't know, but it wasn't my guys. Not my own department, for Chrissake.

MALLY
You're probably right. But let's say there's a chance you're wrong. Just one. One chance in a thousand.
(pause)
The State line's a lonely place to find out.

The Deputy shoots Shockley a bitter look.

DEPUTY
You gonna take that kind of shit? You hear what she's sayin'? 'Bout your own people?

Shockley turns, stares thoughtfully out the window, Mally's words echoing in his mind. After a long, contemplative moment:

SHOCKLEY
How far to the State line?

DEPUTY
(grudgingly)
'Nother five mile.

MALLY
Shockley...?

He turns. In Mally's face is an unspoken plea.

MALLY
(quietly)
I really do have a college degree.

Their eyes hold.

EXTREME CLOSE SHOT - SQUAD CAR SPEEDOMETER

The needle holds at an even 60 mph, the digital odometer marking off the tenths of a mile. As we watch, 55,499.9 becomes 55,500.

AWAY TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Approaching headlights illuminate a signpost reading:

Welcome to California

...then darkness as a camper truck whooshes past.

ANGLE SHIFTS to include a section of otherwise deserted highway just beyond the signpost. A five-car convoy approaches, headlights cutting brilliant wedges in the night as they quietly pull over onto the shoulder of the road -- two on one side, three on the other.

INSIDE ONE OF THE CARS

Dimly illuminated by the other headlights, we SEE only two dark forms in the front seat, HEAR the:

DRIVER'S VOICE
(into radiophone)
Barstow relay, this is Red Fox One, do you copy?

VOICE OVER RADIO
(filtered)
We read you, Red Fox One.

DRIVER'S VOICE
All vehicles at State line. Parked and waiting. Rabbit should arrive... oh, any minute.

VOICE OVER RADIO
(filtered)
Ten-four. Will relay to L.A.

Transmission ends with a click.

LONG SHOT - HIGHWAY - THE FIVE CARS

As one by one their headlights are extinguished, plunging the area into darkness. CAMERA HOLDS.

And HOLDS.

BACK TO:

INSIDE THE SHERIFF'S CAR - FAVORING SHOCKLEY - MOVING

He sits slumped in the seat staring sightlessly through the windshield. Doubts and apprehensions whirl in his mind, reveal themselves in his eyes.

DEPUTY
State line's just beyond that rise up there.
(pause - then)
Good thing you're lightin' outa here. I ever see your ass again, I'll cut off your pecker and shove it down your gullet.

SHOCKLEY
(dully)
Keep your hands to yourself.

THROUGH WINDSHIELD - SHOCKLEY'S POV

We SEE the up-grade to which the Deputy referred -- a low prominence illuminated by the car's headlights.

ON MALLY

She sits tensely in the back seat.

MALLY
I may be wrong, Shockley. But what if I'm right?

CLOSE ON SHOCKLEY

He says nothing. His eyes remain straight ahead...on the rapidly approaching hill.

EXT. HIGHWAY - THE SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

as it starts up the rise.

EXT. TOP OF THE RISE - THE STATE LINE - NIGHT

We SEE only darkness. But through the darkness we HEAR the idling engines of the five cars.

Waiting...

INSIDE THE SQUAD CAR - NIGHT - CLOSE ON DEPUTY

Driving. His face reflecting the bitterness he feels.

CLOSE ON SHOCKLEY

Conflicted. His mind spinning.

CLOSE ON MALLY

Silent. Apprehensive.

GROUP SHOT

as Shockley abruptly turns to the Deputy:

SHOCKLEY
Pull over.

DEPUTY
Haw?

SHOCKLEY
Stop the car.

DEPUTY
The hell you say.

Like a punch to the kidneys, Shockley shoves the Magnum into his side. The man grunts in pain, nods rapidly:

DEPUTY
Okay, okay...

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The squad car pulls over, engine idling. Keeping his Magnum aimed at the Deputy, Shockley gets out, opens rear door. As Mally joins him:

SHOCKLEY
(to Deputy)
I'll leave your gun right here at the roadside. You can come back and get it.

DEPUTY
(a snarl)
You damn bet I will. And I won't be alone. You gonna have some fast talkin' to do, Colonel. Those fellas waitin' on you are gonna wonder why you bailed out. I'm gonna tell 'em you chose sides -- got yourself a little nookie 'n' chose sides!

He tromps on the gas. The car spurts forward, the doors slamming from the backlash.

Gripping Mally's arm, Shockley pulls her roughly away from the highway on a course parallel to it, but up the hillside toward the crest above.

SHOCKLEY
(angrily)
Move your tail. If you're wrong, I want to be close enough to explain it to them before that asshole starts spouting off.

AWAY TO:

EXT. CREST OF HILL - NIGHT

Twin points of light blossom INTO LENS as the squad car tops the hill and begins its descent.

FULL SHOT - THE FIVE CARS

Dimly illuminated in the approaching headlights, they flank the highway, engines growling as they idle. The reception committee.

INSIDE SAME CAR AS BEFORE

The two dark forms in the front seat converse in low tones:

PASSENGER'S VOICE
Is that the rabbit?

DRIVER'S VOICE
Can't tell yet.

LONG SHOT - THROUGH THEIR WINDSHIELD - THEIR POV

A passing vehicle speeds by in the direction of Nevada, its headlights briefly illuminating the Deputy's car as they pass each other.

DRIVER'S VOICE
It's him, alright.

PASSENGER'S VOICE
(into microphone)
Red Fox One to all units. Rabbit approaching.

VOICE FROM RADIO
(filtered)
Copy, Red Fox One. We see him.

AWAY TO:

EXT. TOP OF HILL - SHOCKLEY & MALLY

Dark silhouettes, they clamber up INTO FRAME, look off and down toward the highway.

THE HIGHWAY - LONG SHOT - THEIR POV

To CAMERA LEFT (Nevada side of border) we SEE the approaching squad car. To CAMERA RIGHT (California side of border) we SEE in the squad car's headlights the faint outline of the five waiting vehicles.

As the squad car draws nearer, one of the five cars blinks its lights.

INT. SQUAD CAR - THE DEPUTY

Seeing the signal, he blinks his lights in reply, starts to slow down.

INSIDE SAME CAR AS BEFORE

The two forms in the front seat are now SEEN in the approaching squad car's headlights. Hatless, dressed in civilian clothes, they hold shotguns between their legs, gun-butts resting on the floorboards, muzzles in the air.

The Driver snaps a two-word command into his microphone:

DRIVER
Take him.

FULL SHOT - TOWARD THE FIVE CARS

as their headlights flare on -- high beams directed at the oncoming squad car.

INSIDE SQUAD CAR - ON THE DEPUTY

He throws up a hand to block the blinding glare of the lights. Simultaneously --

ALONG THE HIGHWAY - FULL SHOT

A deafening barrage of gunfire erupts from the five cars.

ON THE SQUAD CAR

as bullets rip into it in an awesome, DEAFENING FUSILLADE.

INSIDE THE SQUAD CAR - THE DEPUTY

Blood spurts as slugs rip into his torso and face.

FULL SHOT - THE FIVE CARS & THE SQUAD CAR

The barrage continues -- the squad car swerving wildly from side to side, uncontrolled -- illuminated by the headlights of the five killer cars.

HIGH ANGLE OVERHEAD SHOT - THE CARS - THE AMBUSH

CAMERA SHOOTS STRAIGHT DOWN FROM ABOVE as -- ultimately -- the gunfire ceases and the squad car ploughs off the road.

ON THE SQUAD CAR

Jouncing and bumping over uneven terrain -- trunk and hood

unlatched and flapping -- the ruined vehicle rolls slowly to a stop.

And silence descends like a shroud.

FULL SHOT - THE FIVE CARS

As synchronously as they had arrived, they surge forward onto the highway...make a U-turn...fall into single file.

In a moment they are OUT OF SIGHT, heading back toward L.A.

Only the squad car remains -- a lifeless hulk vaguely perceived through the darkness that engulfs it.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT - SHOCKLEY & MALLY

Transfixed, their stare down at the aftermath of the slaughter. We HEAR the sound of the five cars' engines receding into darkness and anonymity.

Slowly -- without a word -- Shockley turns and starts walking. Away from the hilltop. Away from the highway. Into the night.

Mally hangs back a moment, watching him, then follows.

HOLD on the darkness a very long while, then --

CUT TO:

INT. A CAVERN - SHOCKLEY & MALLY - NIGHT

They occupy a cramped cave-like shelter beneath a toppled boulder. At their feet a meager fire flickers. At the mouth of the cave, Shockley is a hunched and sullen figure blocking the stars -- withdrawn, despondent. Mally remains silent for a while, then moves to his side. Sensing the ravages of betrayal that plague him, an innate compassion surfaces. She reaches out, gently touches his shoulder.

MALLY
(hesitantly)
If it's any consolation...

SHOCKLEY
(a snarl)
What?

Her hand snaps back as if burned.

MALLY
Nothing.

SHOCKLEY
Then shut up.

He returns to his funk. In a moment, having been stifled in her attempt to reach out:

MALLY
I never saw a cop feeling sorry for himself before. Mind if I watch?

He gives her a look of pure hatred.

SHOCKLEY
For two cents and a stick of gum I'd beat the shit out of you.

MALLY
Whatever gets you off, Butch.

SHOCKLEY
(contemptuously)
And after I'm through, where do I leave my twenty bucks?

Her body tenses, her eyes fixed on his.

MALLY
I don't want your money, Shockley. I love you for your mind.

WHAP! -- he slaps her. She barely reacts before WHUMP! -- her knee drives up fiercely into his crotch.

Eyes wide with surprise, mouth slack with unspeakable agony, he doubles over clutching his groin. Pivoting away, he slumps against the wall of the cave as she blithely lights a cigarette, casually exhales a mouthful of smoke.

MALLY
Sorry. I just wanted to jog your thinking.

He sputters and gags an inarticulate stream of invective.

MALLY
(tersely)
You're a loser, Shockley. I'm splitting.

She sweeps disdainfully past him, starting toward the pitchy blackness of the desert.

Still doubled up with pain, Shockley pulls the Magnum from his belt. Its mechanism clicks harshly in the silence as he cocks it, aims it at her retreating form. Hearing it, she stops in her tracks.

MALLY
Are you going to shoot an unarmed woman in the back? How'll that look on your stinking record?

Slowly he straightens, only now regaining his breath.

SHOCKLEY
You don't have a chance in the desert.

MALLY
With a lox-for-brains like you, I don't have a chance. On my own, I do okay.

SHOCKLEY
Yeah? Who saved you from that Deputy?

MALLY
Don't take any bows. If it wasn't for me, you'd have let that schmuck drive us right into the guns.

SHOCKLEY
If it wasn't for you, there wouldn't be any goddam guns! It's you they're trying to kill, remember?

MALLY
It's both of us, you witless idiot! Don't you see that yet?! Why the hell do you think you drew this assignment?

SHOCKLEY
I get the job done.

MALLY
They don't want the job done! They sent you 'cause you're a bum! If they bump you off, nobody -- not a fucking soul -- is going to give a rat's ass! You're a nobody, Shockley. A nothing! You're just a faded number on a rusty badge and you've been set up by your own people to take the fall with me! Wake up, for Chrissake! At least that way, when the bullets hit you, you'll know where the hell they're coming from!

She stalks away toward the darkness. Shockley stares after her, unmoving, her words ringing in his ears. Slowly he lowers the pistol, slumps down onto the ground, stares dispassionately at the fire.

SHOCKLEY
(absently)
Watch out for sidewinders.

Long silence. Then, from the darkness:

MALLY'S VOICE
What -- ?

SHOCKLEY
Sidewinders. A kind of rattlesnake.
They only come out after dark.

There is another pause from the impenetrable darkness. Then, uncertainly:

MALLY
Horse shit.

SHOCKLEY
(off-handedly)
They're drawn by body heat. You'll never see them 'til they strike.

More silence. Then Mally moves from the darkness back into the light, slowly re-enters their shelter.

MALLY
I'll leave in the morning.

SHOCKLEY
Sure.

MALLY
I will. I'll make it, too. You'll see.

She curls up on the sand, her back to him. He glances at her.

SHOCKLEY
I guess if you were still in Vegas, you'd just be going to work about now, huh?

MALLY
Polish your badge, Shockley. It's all you've got.

Shockley's eyes move away from her...out into the night. Almost unconsciously he withdraws his wallet, flips it open.

INSERT - HIS BADGE

It glistens dully in the firelight.

FAVORING SHOCKLEY

The fire casts flickering shadows across his face as he stares at the badge.

SHOCKLEY
(to himself)
Miserable bitch.

Mally's voice drifts over to him, already half asleep.

MALLY
Welcome to the ranks of the disenchanted.

SHOCKLEY
(without turning)
Shut up and go to sleep.

A beat.

MALLY
I'm a counter-puncher, Shockley. If you can't last the twelve rounds, stay out of the ring.

About to voice a retort, Shockley falls silent. She will never let him have the last word.

He slowly closes the wallet, hiding the badge. The CAMERA MOVES IN.

He stares into the fire. Alone with his thoughts. With events. With his betrayal. Alone with the consuming knowledge that what Mally has told him is true.

SLOW DISSOLVE THRU TO:

EXT. DESERT - PANNING SHOT - MORNING

ANGLE encompasses a sere and boulder-strewn landscape, harsh and forbidding as the surface of the moon...the cave in which Mally and Shockley have taken shelter in SEEN as the LENS ZOOMS SLOWLY I

INT. CAVERN - FAVORING SHOCKLEY

He sits in the same position as when last seen, the warm tones of dawn washing across his stubbled, haggard, sleepless face. Reflectively, he studies the carbon of Mally's subpoena.

ANGLE OPENS to include Mally, supine on the hard floor of their tiny shelter. As we watch, consciousness returns. Initially oblivious to her surroundings, she stretches, yawns, awakens. She looks up in sleepy surprise to see Shockley sitting there.

MALLY
Shockley...?

SHOCKLEY
Who's DeLucca?

MALLY
(still barely awake)
What...?

SHOCKLEY
DeLucca. Angelo DeLucca. As in The City of Los Angeles vs. DeLucca. Who is he?

Sitting up, rubbing the sleep from her eyes, she frowns.

MALLY
Have you been sitting there all night?

He stuffs the subpoena in his pocket, turns.

SHOCKLEY
Cut the mother hen crap. You're supposed to be a witness at his trial. Who is he?

She shrugs indifferently.

MALLY
Small-time.

SHOCKLEY
Is he mob?

MALLY
Who knows?

SHOCKLEY
Talk, for Chrissake.

MALLY
Hell, I suppose he is. So what?

SHOCKLEY
A: The mob makes book you'll never appear at his trial. B: Somebody in the LAPD doesn't want you there, either. A plus B equals a tie-in between the mob and the cops.

She yawns, shakes her head.

MALLY
You sat on your ass all night figuring that out? Congratulations.

SHOCKLEY
Tell me about DeLucca.

Threatened by the topic, almost afraid of it, she does her best to deflect it.

MALLY
I only met the guy once. Jesus, Shockley, I'm no good without a cup of coffee. Will you lay off?

SHOCKLEY
The one time that you met him -- what happened?

MALLY
I don't want to talk about it.

SHOCKLEY
(exasperated)
For all I know, half the goddam L.A. police force is crooked, and you 'don't want to talk about it.'

MALLY
You heard what I said.

SHOCKLEY
Who are you protecting?

MALLY
Nobody!

SHOCKLEY
Bullshit!

MALLY
Me. I'm protecting me. Okay? Now lay off!

SHOCKLEY
Protecting yourself from what? From me???? Have I tried to run you off the road? Have I tried to jump your bones? Have I tried to pump you full of holes? Jesus, when are you gonna realize I'm not the enemy!

MALLY
Hooray for Mr. Clean.

SHOCKLEY
What did DeLucca do?

MALLY
I don't want to talk about it.

Shockley picks up on the girl's authenticity. He studies her. When he speaks again, his voice is low, perturbed.

SHOCKLEY
Somehow, you're the key. You're the only proof -- and both sides know it.
(a beat - the word sticks in his throat)
...Please...

She turns to him. There is a hunted, almost supplicative vulnerability in his eyes. It is not lost on her.

A heavy silence descends between them. Ultimately:

MALLY
(quietly)
DeLucca set me up with somebody. Asked me to be 'special nice' to him.

SHOCKLEY
Who was it?

MALLY
Someone on the force.

SHOCKLEY
The L.A. police force?

She nods, subdued by the memory.

SHOCKLEY
What was his name?

MALLY
I didn't ask.

SHOCKLEY
What happened?

CAMERA SLOWLY PUSHES IN on Mally. Almost despite herself -- almost as if to exorcise the grinning daemons of anguished recollection -- the words spill out haltingly:

MALLY
I went to this hotel room in Vegas. There was...this guy. He seemed like... like an okay guy. I asked him how he wanted it. ...He told me to undress.
(MORE)

MALLY (CONT'D)
...Then he had me lie down on the bed...told me to lie on my stomach. ...I couldn't see him. And he told me to...to open my legs. ...Then he --

Her voice catches. She averts her face with the pain and shame of the memory.

MALLY
(continuing)
-- He took his gun...and shoved it... and held it there with one hand while he...I mean I could hear what he was doing with his other hand...and...
(a beat)
...he said if I screamed...he'd pull the trigger...

Shockley's face tightens.

SHOCKLEY
Describe him.

MALLY
Fifty...fifty-three. Brown eyes -- grey hair -- a face like -- like stone -- a voice that --
(a beat)
It seemed to come from the bottom of a tomb.

Shockley stares at her, stunned.

SHOCKLEY
(hushed)
Blakelock.

And suddenly -- shattering the stillness -- the ROARING SOUND of an engine.

Mally and Shockley whirl. Instinctively he pushes her behind him, blocking the tiny entrance to their burrow with his body, gun in hand as we HEAR a second engine, then a third...

SHOCKLEY
Hogs.

MALLY
(frightened)
What?

SHOCKLEY
Motorcycles.

Restraining her with a hand, he starts out through the opening of their shelter.

SHOCKLEY
Stay there!

And he is gone.

LONG SHOT - SHOCKLEY

CAMERA PANS his low, dodging run as he crosses the open space toward a rocky embankment, the SOUND of the engines emanating from the other side.

Pistol in hand, he clambers upward for a point of vantage.

AT THE CAVE - ON MALLY

Unable or unwilling to remain where she is, she darts after him. Throughout, the SOUND of the engines SWELLS.

ON SHOCKLEY

He peers around a mammoth boulder, CAMERA ANGLING TO SHOOT PAST HIM.

Down below, occupying an open acre of desert and surrounded by huge glacial boulders, we SEE a full-blown Hells Angels encampment comprising fifty bikes...gear...tools...women...tents... everything. -- And such a convocation of seedy, rag-tag, gruff and bearded bike-Vikings as has never been assembled. The SOUND of their motorcycles heralds the morning with deep-throated rpm's.

As Shockley reacts to the funky tapestry before his eyes, Mally clambers upward to his side, stares O.S. with a mixture of horror and astonishment.

MALLY
My God...

SHOCKLEY
Stay down.

He starts to rise. She grabs him, alarmed.

MALLY
Where're you going?!

SHOCKLEY
Stay down!

He pushes her down, stands full-height -- his voice reverberatin from the rock-strewn sides of the tiny valley:

SHOCKLEY
All right, you mother-jumpers! This is a bust!

ON THE BIKERS

turning at the SOUND of his voice. Dozens of them: big, dour, fearsome-looking.

ON SHOCKLEY

Gun in hand, silhouetted against the morning sky, he descends into their midst -- a lone Christian among lions.

SHOCKLEY
(as he advances)
Everybody over there, against the bikes! Hands up, feet out and your balls in your pockets. Move.

BRIEF CUT - MALLY

Crouched at the rim of the boulders she looks down at the "bust" in horror.

MALLY
(half-whisper - a mile a minute)
Shockley, for God's sake -- they'll kill you! -- You stupid, mindless, brainless...

FAVORING SHOCKLEY

Gesturing with his gun as he marches among the hulking bikers, moving hard and fast.

SHOCKLEY
Didn't you hear me, shorty? -- move your big butt over there and get them feet spread out. You, get in gear! Up against the choppers where I can see your hands!

FLASH CUT - A BIKER

Looming up behind Shockley with a tire-iron in his hand.

ON SHOCKLEY

Spinning, ducking the blow, and as the Biker whirls towards him, catching the guy in the balls with a stiff-legged boot that sucks the air from every male in sight.

SHOCKLEY
First turkey tries that again, I'll shoot him and pluck him and shove an apple up his ass.

He pushes through their midst, backing them up, coming on...

SHOCKLEY
Any takers? You? You? You?

BRIEF CUT - TWO BIKERS

Barely awake, rubbing sleep from their eyes...

BIKER #1
This guy for real?

BIKER #2
Gotta be high on something.

BIKER #3
(spooked)
He ain't right in the head, man. Do what he says.

BACK TO SHOCKLEY

He strides through them, pushing, shoving, brandishing his Magnum. It is the consummate bluff, accomplished with consummate cool -- a tour de force.

SHOCKLEY
Over there! By your bikes! Move!

Miraculously, one by one, they fall back.

BRIEF CUT - MALLY

Watching in utter astonishment.

BACK TO SCENE

Shockley pushes a bearded giant. The biker retreats, whining:

BIKER
You can't do this without a warrant.

SHOCKLEY
(addressing them all)
Man says I can't do this without a warrant! Man don't know jack-shit. Anybody here but me know what the law says? Any lawyers? Who's gonna tell me why I don't need a warrant? Who's a lawyer here? One of you hunks of buffalo shit gonna tell me? Who's got any brain cells left?

Lined up by their bikes, they stand almost pitifully as he parades in front of them, haranguing to beat any drill sergeant.

SHOCKLEY
(continuing)
You! -- you with the hair! -- you look smart. I want to hear it! I want to hear what entitles me to come in here and bust you any goddam time I like. Loud. The answer is...?

BIKER #4
(quietly)
You're nuts, man. Get off my case...

SHOCKLEY
The answer is 'reasonable' what?

BIKER #4
(barely audible)
Reasonable suspicion.

SHOCKLEY
(to all)
Right! Reasonable suspicion! If I have reasonable suspicion a felony's been committed I can go anywhere at any time and do any goddam thing I want, because I carry this badge and this gun, and because the love of Jesus Christ is in my pretty brown eyes.

BRIEF CUT - TWO BIKER MOMMAS

Routinely gathering their possessions and stuffing them into saddlebags and knapsacks. One of them scoops up a half-naked child.

BIKER MOMMA
C'mon, Fred. Daddy and Mommy are moving again.

BACK TO SCENE

SHOCKLEY
Now I'm kinda stuck in a fix, here. One of you turkeys has committed a felony. I don't know who, and I don't know when, and I don't even know what the felony is, and frankly I don't give a shit. But one of you's got the mark of Cain on his ass, and that turkey knows who I'm talking about. Doesn't he?

His eyes glint as he rakes them with his gaze.

SHOCKLEY
Now that means I've gotta bust you all, understand?

A general groan of disappointment rises from the ranks of the unshaven.

SHOCKLEY
How-ever...

And with this his voice assumes a portentous intonation:

SHOCKLEY
You've got a choice: If you all clear-ass out of here in thirty seconds, I'll let you off with just a warning. If you don't -- if you give me any shit...

...and with this his voice acquires the edge of real menace:

SHOCKLEY
...within half an hour there's gonna be more cops and more guns and more marijuana-sniffing dogs and more handcuffs than any of you ever saw in your wildest hallucinations. Do you hear me??? -- You got thirty seconds.

He spins to the biker nearest:

SHOCKLEY
Count it off!

The biker fairly snaps to attention, begins to count out loud:

BIKER #4
One. Two. Three. Four. (etc.)

VARIOUS CUTS

The SOUND of his voice CONTINUES OVER as in a flurry of movement the entire encampment becomes a maelstrom of activity -- "colors" are pulled on, head-bands tied, all manner of articles thrust into sacks and saddlebags, last-minute adjustments on motorcycles made, the first bikes pulling out...

NEW ANGLE - TRACKING SHOT - SHOCKLEY

He strides through the encampment uttering an exhortation here, an epithet there, pointing out forgotten possessions, overseeing the vast and sudden exodus -- pausing only long enough to collar a biker about to start up his chopper.

SHOCKLEY
This bike stays here. You double up with him.

BIKER #5
This is my chopper, Charley.

Shockley's Magnum finds the soft spot in the biker's armpit.

SHOCKLEY
And this is my .38 Special.

The biker backs away, muttering to himself as he climbs aboard the seat of his buddy's chopper.

FULL SHOT - HIGH ANGLE

Dust swirls as three dozen engines WIND OUT, big machines jockeying in graceful arabesques as their owners swerve toward the exit from the canyon, Mommas perches behind and leaning against their sissy-bars. The NOISE is overwhelming, RISING to a crescendo as the full force of the nomads gather, bunching like huge metal swallows before spreading out in a ragged file and churning away...through the canyon's entrance...and off across the desert.

Left behind is the single bike that Shockley had commandeered... Shockley himself...and Mally -- visible as she emerges from cover and descends the ragged boulder-strewn slope to join him.

Shockley watches the departing bikers -- SEEN as a moving trail of dust -- then lets out a pent-up breath, holds out a hand and studies it. It trembles.

Turning, he heads for the motorcycle even as Mally reaches level ground and intercepts him.

MALLY
Digusting! Ridiculous! Outrageous!
Shockley, you're totally outrageous!

SHOCKLEY
(wearily)
Thanks.

For all that she is frowning, she is plainly enthralled by his coup. They pull up beside the bike -- a rusty but venerable old Harley. He points at the pillion behind the seat.

SHOCKLEY
Get on.

He swings a leg over the saddle, offers her a hand to help her aboard. Unthinking, she takes it. For a moment -- their hands thus touching -- her eyes meet his. And for a moment, sweeping away the thrill of Shockley's victory, we SEE the shadows of other feelings cross their faces -- a mute reminder of all that has happened, and that which is yet to come. Then:

MALLY
Do you know how to drive one of these?

SHOCKLEY
No, but hum a few bars and I'll fake it.

She gets on behind him, self-consciously puts her hands around his waist as he kicks down on the starter and the engine coughs to life. Pulling the bike of its stand he shifts gears. Dust flies as he does an accidental Brodie -- then as old instincts take over he asserts his mastery of the machine. It thunders off, AWAY FROM CAMERA.

HOLD as desired, and then --

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - LOW ANGLE

The black ribbon of asphalt stretches AWAY FROM LENS as, in EXT. B.G., we see the motorcycle meet the highway and turn onto it initially little more than a black speck far down the road -- acquiring mass and contour as it draws nearer, its engine increasingly LOUD as it eats up the distance until with a ROAR it speeds PAST CAMERA.

SHOCKLEY & MALLY ON THE BIKE - TRAVELING

Squinting against the wind, Shockley sits straight in the saddle,

at one with the bike beneath him. Her hair wind-swept, Mally tightens her grip around his waist. Her feet tucked up on the buddy-bars, the throbbing of the engine communicates its rhythm through Shockley's body. And as we watch, she leans her head against the broad expanse of his back. SOUND of the engine segues over a --

CUT AWAY TO:

AERIAL SHOT - TRAVELING - SECTION OF DESERT - DAY

CAMERA occupies a helicopter, the SOUND of its engine OVERWHELMING IN F.G. From an altitude of 500 ft. we SEE the demolishe squad car on the desert floor. It is surrounded by official vehicles -- the lifeless form of the Deputy conveyed to an ambulance beneath a white sheet.

LONG SHOT - THE HELICOPTER

A four-place Sikorsky -- its reg. number and color denoting private ownership -- hovers briefly over the scene of the previous night's ambush; then it spins and slides off at a tangent away from the scene of the wreck.

INSIDE THE HELICOPTER

It is occupied by two men, their features indistinguishable behind silvered sunglasses. As the PILOT manipulates the controls, ANGLE SHIFTS to reveal the Winchester 30-30 resting across the PASSENGER'S knees.

AERIAL SHOT - FROM THE HELICOPTER

CAMERA SWOOPS over the hillside from which Shockley and Mally had observed the slaughter of the Deputy, and we HOVER momentarily before the chopper's crew finds what they seek.

...CAMERA ZOOMS IN to the soft desert terrain in which we see two distinct sets of footprints.

The chopper BUZZES across the desert, following the tracks.

JUMP TO:

EXT. "CANYON" - FULL SHOT

The place is deserted, the canyon floor chewed up by the treadmark graffiti of the motorcycles, long since gone.

With a chattering of its rotors the Sikorsky swoops INTO VIEW above the canyon...describes an aerial pirouette...hunting...

AERIAL SHOT - THE CANYON FLOOR

We SEE the maze of tracks left by the nomads' motorcycles, NOTE the multitude of them that leave the canyon in an easterly direction...

...and the tracks of but a single bike heading west.

Shockley's.

THE CHOPPER

dips, spins...takes off in pursuit.

CUT TO:

ESTABLISHING SHOT - A SMALL TOWN - DAY

A small, dusty, one-horse town off the main highway and virtually in the shadow of a ragged rank of foothills. FOCUS PULLS to the facade of a weater-beaten general store with an aluminum-and-glass telephone booth standing on its porch. Inside we SEE Shockley. Parked at the curb is the stolen motorcycle.

EXT. THE PHONE BOOTH

Through the glass we HEAR:

SHOCKLEY
(into phone)
Give me Detective Josephson, Metro Squad.

AWAY TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM (LOS ANGELES) - DAY

A phone rings in F.G., the ANGLE WIDENING to include a portion of the squad room and Josie, who swivels from his typewriter to lift the ringing phone from its cradle.

JOSIE
(into phone)
Josephson...

INTERCUT - SHOCKLEY & JOSIE

-- at their respective telephones, Shockley in Nevada, Josie in L.A.

SHOCKLEY
Josie -- it's me.

JOSIE
(appalled)
Ben? Jeeeesus, Ben --

Realizing he is within earshot of other officers in the squad room, Josie covers the mouthpiece, speaks furtively, hushed:

JOSIE
There's an APB out on you, for Chrissake! Why'd you do it?

SHOCKLEY
Do what?

JOSIE
That Sheriff's Deputy...last night... why the fuck did you have to kill him?

Shockley's face reflects his horror at the accusation.

SHOCKLEY
I didn't kill anyone, Josie. It's Blakelock. Do you hear me?

JOSIE
(bewildered)
It's who?

EXT. THE SMALL TOWN - LONG SHOT

Approaching low on the horizon, we SEE the Sikorsky chopper, do not yet hear its engine.

SHOCKLEY'S VOICE
(filtered - explosively)
It's Blakelock -- Internal Affairs. He's tied in with the mob. -- Trying to nail me, for Chrissake. Me and the girl!

JOSIE - AT HIS PHONE

JOSIE
(into phone)
Girl?! What girl? What the hell are you talking about?

BACK TO:

THE PHONE BOOTH & SHOCKLEY

SHOCKLEY IS A BLUR IN F.G. as we SEE the approaching helicopter through the glass wall of the phone booth -- a sinister airborne apparition.. Shockley, ensconced in the phone booth, cannot HEAR

the rising sound of its engine.

SHOCKLEY
(into phone - shouting)
The witness in that trial -- Gus Mally -- it's not a guy, it's a broad! Blakelock knows that if she testifies, she'll torpedo him, so he's trying to ice her --

AERIAL SHOT - FROM THE CHOPPER

as it circles, its Pilot gesturing what he sees below.

BRIEF CUT - FROM THE CHOPPER

We SEE the lone motorcycle parked outside the phone booth, Shockley's figure visible within.

IN THE CHOPPER

The Passenger levers a shell into his rifle.

IN THE PHONE BOOTH - ON SHOCKLEY

He stoppers his other ear against the SOUND of the chopper's engine, his concentration on the phone call, attributing the ENGINE NOISE to some other source.

SHOCKLEY
(above the noise)
Do you hear me, Josie??? You've got to trust me! You've gotta --

CRACK! -- a bullet spikes through two sides of the glass booth, missing Shockley by inches. He whirls.

BRIEF CUTAWAY - JOSIE

Frowning at the garbled SOUNDS over the receiver:

JOSIE
Ben???

BACK TO THE PHONE BOOTH

as Shockley barrels out of it a split-second before three more bullets shatter the glass.

BRIEF CUTAWAY - JOSIE

Clutching the telephone...confused...concerned...

BACK TO SCENE - ON THE CHOPPER

It swerves, keeping Shockley in VIEW as he races toward the entrance to the general store.

INSIDE THE STORE - FAVORING MALLY

Shockley bursts through the door even as Mally turns away from the small lunch counter with an armload of food.

MALLY
(seeing him - smiles)
Two double cheeseburgers, fries, and --

SHOCKLEY
Come on!

Their lunch goes flying as he grabs her wrist, pulls her on a dead run toward the front of the store through which he had entere

HIGH ANGLE - THE ACTION

About to touch down on the dusty main street, the chopper's two occupants are unprepared for Shockley's and Mally's precipitous exit from the store. The craft yaws wrenchingly as they hurtle toward the motorcycle parked at the curb.

SHOCKLEY & MALLY

Clambering frantically onto the bike, the helicopter CHURNING in B.G.

MALLY
Who <u>are</u> they?

SHOCKLEY
Blakelock's buddies.

The motorcycle's engine ROARS, front wheels leaving the ground as it leaps into the street.

EXT. MAIN STREET

What little business activity exists has been panicked by events; the bike thunders down the street, heedless of all living things -- the chopper SURGING in low overhead.

FLASH CUTS

Pedestrians dive for protection, a pickup truck careens wildly into an oncoming car.

ON SHOCKLEY & MALLY - TRAVELING

Shockley opens the gas to full throttle, Mally clinging to him desperately as the helicopter -- above and B.G. -- jockeys after them for position. SOUND of the two engines is THUNDEROUS.

SHOCKLEY'S POV - TRAVELING

The main street an obstacle course of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, LENS SHUDDERING with the onrush of the bike.

PANNING SHOT - THE CHOPPER

ROARING overhead as CAMERA HOLDS IT in a vertical 180-degree TILT...turning the entire world upside-down.

LOW ANGLE - TRAVELING - THE BIKE

It swerves off the asphalt main street onto a dirt crossing. Dust roils in a savage cloud as Shockley pulls out all the stops, the old engine THROBBING.

INSIDE THE CHOPPER - TRAVELING

CAMERA SHOOTS through the lucite cockpit bubble, over the shoulders of the two men within. The Passenger fires his rifle out the side window at the palpable -- if speeding -- target.

ON SHOCKLEY & MALLY

Shockley weaves erratically from one side of the road to the other, never presenting a predictable vector to the men shooting from above. Bullets bite chunks of the road in the wake of the veering bike.

NEW ANGLE

On inspiration Shockley spins the bike in a tight 180, a rooster-tail of dust erupting from its wheels as they gain purchase in the topsoil...gaining a moment or two on the chopper which is forced to bank, skim, and change course.

He guides the Harley in a bee-line toward the foothills.

PANNING SHOT - THE BIKE - THE CHOPPER

with the motorcycle some sixty yards ahead of the helicopter that pursues it at an altitude of a mere 100 ft. Ahead -- the length of a football field away -- a narrow defile between the hills offers possible protection, and towards this avenue the Harley careens -- a hare with the hound giving chase.

SHOCKLEY TIGHT IN F.G. - CHOPPER IN B.G. - TRAVELING

CAMERA precedes both the motorcycle and the chopper as the bike thunders joltingly over the uneven terrain, the Sikorsky inexorably gaining, SEEN over Shockley's shoulder. As it seems the chopper must certainly run the bike into the ground --

SIDE ANGLE - PANNING

The Harley is swallowed up by the ravine between hills, the chopper SNARLING as it banks sharply upwards.

IN THE RAVINE - LOW ANGLE

PANNING with the bike as Shockley lays it over to take the turning, twisting configuration of the canyon floor.

FROM THE HELICOPTER

as the co-pilot aims and fires repeatedly, hoping for a lucky wing-shot or the fortuitous ricochet.

TRAVELING SHOT - THE BIKE - IN THE RAVINE

Slugs whine and whistle off the rocky slopes, punctuating the throaty SOUND of the bike that rackets back and forth in the confining space.

CLOSE SHOT - MOTORCYCLE - DETAIL

as a jagged piece of rock or bullet THUDS into the engine. The old Harley coughs, sputters, regains its rhythm.

INSIDE THE CHOPPER

Seeing the bike slow down momentarily, the gunman flashes his partner a thumbs-up "victory".

TRAVELING SHOT - SHOCKLEY & MALLY

He shouts against the slipstream:

SHOCKLEY
Engine's crapping out!!!

His eyes rake the area, looking desperately ahead for someplace to ditch -- to hide -- to escape --

ON THE HELICOPTER

Settling in for the coup de grace, approaching the final curve in pursuit of the motorcycle.

TRAVELING SHOT - FROM HELICOPTER

as Shockley wrenches the sputtering bike around the final curve and into the open.

SHOCK CUT - THROUGH HELICOPTER BUBBLE

LENS SHOOTS DIRECTLY at the heavy grey cables of a high-tension line hanging low across the mouth of the canyon, suspended from towering steel pylons.

FLASH CUT - INSIDE THE CHOPPER

The horrified faces of the pilot and his passenger -- a beat before the SCREEN explodes in a blue-white flash.

ON SHOCKLEY & MALLY - TRAVELING

They look up in awe and horror at the ghastly ELECTRICAL EXPLOSIO directly overhead. Fragments of helicopter rain down, deluging the landscape in a clattering, grisly shower.

FULL SHOT

as the bulk of the chopper plummets to earth no more than thirty feet from LENS. As the motorcycle recedes in the distance, CAMER ZOOMS IN on a severed human arm, the Pilot's, for the briefest of moments before we --

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - EXTREME LONG SHOT - DAY

Flat and arid as the skin of hell, the desert stretches toward a merciless horizon. In far B.G. the midday sun pours savage heat upon a slow-moving umber filament that travels ACROSS OUR VIEW.

NEW ANGLE - FREIGHT TRAIN

For that is what it is, SEEN from a distance of a quarter-mile. Twin black beetle-like diesels pull a seemingly endless string of freight-cars through the desultory heat at an agonizing 20 mph.

CAMERA SLOWLY PANS off the train toward the desert, ZOOMING IN on a tiny speck of motion a half-mile away.

TRAVELING SHOT - THE MOTORCYCLE - SHOCKLEY & MALLY

Its engine coughing and sputtering, Shockley forces the bike at full throttle towards the train. Mally clings tenaciously to him, shouts over the SOUND of the bike's malfunction:

MALLY
You're crazy! We'll never make it!

SHOCKLEY
Nag, nag, nag.

HIGH ANGLE - THE TRAIN - THE MOTORCYCLE

The string of freight cars traverses FRAME from L to R -- the Harley a good 200 yards away as it enters VIEW. Even an unskilled eye can perceive that Shockley's chances of reaching the final cars are slim.

FROM GROUND LEVEL

CAMERA SHOOTS from behind the moving train, Shockley and Mally glimpsed intermittently between the freight cars as they BLUR PAST LENS. Each brief SIGHTING of the bike reveals it to be only fractionally closer.

PAST SHOCKLEY & MALLY - TOWARD TRAIN

Most of the freight cars have already trundled past. Only a dozen dilapidated cattle-cars and the caboose are within conceivable reach.

ON THE MOTORCYCLE - SHOCKLEY & MALLY

as with a mechanical shudder the engine dies.

SHOCKLEY
Bail out!

Mally throws herself from the bike as its momentum slackens, Shockley following a moment later. The Harley topples, wheels churning up sand in the throes of its mechanical death. Through the cloud of roiling dust, Shockley grips Mally's hand:

SHOCKLEY
Run!

AT THE TRAIN - SIDE ANGLE - TRACKING SHOT

Shockley and Mally hurtle INTO VIEW at a tangent, making for one of the hindmost cattle-cars. Desperate -- hot air catching in their throats -- they race through the shifting sand toward the moving train, its wheels rumbling massively, mindless of their puny human assault.

ON THE TRAIN - CLOSE SHOT

We GLIMPSE the half-open door to a cattle-car -- the promise of haven within.

SHOCKLEY & MALLY

Face contorted with effort, Shockley attempts to gain a hand-hold on the open door, hindered by Mally's shorter stride as she falters...falling back...

MALLY
I can't --

Shockley summons every ounce of stamina...hand outstretched toward the open door...half dragging Mally along...the train beginning to inch away...

CLOSE SHOT - AT THE DOOR

as from the car's dark interior reaches the startling emminence of a human hand -- outstretched and begrimed.

ON SHOCKLEY'S HAND

It locks unquestioningly onto the proffered, disembodied one that extends from within.

PANNING SHOT - THE CATTLE CAR

Assisted by his unseen benefactor, Shockley swings up and into the car, pulling Mally up bodily with him.

INT. CATTLE CAR - DAY

We SEE a mosaic of arms and legs as Shockley and Mally collapse in a heap on the floor of the car. LENS ISOLATES Shockley's handcuffs as they tumble from his belt and clatter across the sullied floor of the car.

ON SHOCKLEY

gasping for breath, he gains his hands and knees, raises his eyes to his as-yet-unseen Samaritan.

SHOCKLEY
Thanks, buddy.

HIS POV - TWO HOBOES

Of indeterminate age, their clothing a rag-tag assortment of cast-offs -- the older of the two men cracks a grin.

HOBO #1
We seen you comin'.

ANGLE WIDENS as a third HOBO picks up Shockley's handcuffs, his eyes traveling from his acquisition to the fugitives.

HOBO #3
We got ourselves a bull!

ON HOBO #1

as the grin is swept aside by a look of hatred and betrayal.

What happens next occurs in a matter of split seconds, HAND HELD CAMERA capturing the action in a fragmentary BLUR of motion. We sense rather than see the ragged FIGURES hurl themselves upon Shockley's still-prostrate form -- sense rather than see the ferocity of their attack -- HEAR Mally's scream, shrill and terrified.

ON MALLY

as she throws herself at the three-man barrier separating her from Shockley:

MALLY
Stop it! Let him go!!!

A back-hand blow from Hobo #1 sends her tumbling against the far side of the car.

FLASH CUTS

The haft of a mucking shovel descends on the base of Shockley's skull. Begrimed and savage hands haul his semi-conscious form erect...bind his outstretched arms to the slatted wall with baling wire.

FAVORING SHOCKLEY

He half-stands, half-hangs from the slatted wall of the cattle car -- wrists pinioned to the slats with wire. Semi-conscious, he moans, his head lolling on his shoulder. ANGLE WIDENS to include his assailants.

Faces streaked with the greasepaint of poverty and hard traveling, the three hoboes' eyes reflect the merciless glint of hunted animals. We HEAR the rhythmic, unremitting clackety/clackety/clack of trainwheels over the rail-heads as they study their prey.

HOBO #1
What're you doin' here, bull?

SHOCKLEY
(through his pain)
Looking for God. Seen Him around?

WHAP! -- the 'bo's knuckles impact against Shockley's cheek.

ON MALLY

as with wordless vengeance she attacks a second time -- again sent sprawling.

BACK TO SCENE

Hobo #1 surveying the image Shockley presents.

HOBO #1
Know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna castrate this here bull. -- Gonna cut off his balls 'n' stuff 'em down his throat. Then piss in it.

CLOSE SHOT - DETAIL

A straight-razor materializes in his hand.

CLOSE SHOT - SHOCKLEY

Seeing the razor, Shockley tugs mightily at the baling wire that binds his wrists -- to no avail.

CLOSE SHOT - HOBO #2

He giggles. We sense that the component parts of his mind have been disassembled by some genetic accident and never wholly restored to proper order.

GROUP SHOT - SHOCKLEY & HOBOES

A grim tableau as the three men close in on Shockley -- SEEN in the funereal cross-hatch of light that slants into the car through the slatted walls.

Kneeling, Hobo #1's grimy hands work feverishly to undo Shockley's belt buckle. Abruptly, from O.S.:

MALLY'S VOICE
What are you? -- a bunch of goddam fairies?

There is a tone to her voice which cannot be ignored. Turning singly, the men react to what they see.

NEW ANGLE - FAVORING MALLY

She stands in IMMEDIATE F.G., the CAMERA SHOOTING FROM BEHIND HER towards the hoboes. Her hands undo the buttons on her blouse, allowing the flimsy garment to hang loosely around her shoulders.

CLOSE ON MALLY

LENS is tight on her head and shoulders as she stares at the trio clustered around Shockley -- the embers of stark terror visible in her gaze -- a terror she struggles to conceal as:

MALLY
(challengingly)
If you want to play with boys, go ahead. But I'd like to see if you've got anything but rusty plumbing between your legs.

ON HOBO #1

A squat hunchbacked pariah, his milky eyes devour the half-nude

girl, O.S. We can see his priorities rearrange themselves in his battered mind.

Then, slowly, he starts toward her.

EXT. TRACKS - PANNING SHOT - THE TRAIN

It rumbles PAST CAMERA, ponderous and interminable.

INT. THE CATTLE CAR - CLOSE ON SHOCKLEY

Face contorted with pain and rage, he fights the wire that binds him. Blood oozes from his wrists as the wire bites into his flesh. O.S. we HEAR the small animal sounds of horror and suffering that mark Mally's sacrifice.

A sudden SCREAM is torn from her throat, echoes over Shockley's face. Tears of fury and hatred course down his cheeks as -- oblivious to all pain -- he pulls with superhuman effort against the wire that slices into his wrists.

CLOSE ON WIRE

as it suddenly snaps and Shockley's hand drops free.

CLOSE SHOT - THE RAPE

CAMERA FOCUSES on a single image amidst the blurred and brutal assault: Mally's hand....outstretched...trembling...a supplication for help where none exists. Her VOICE is a muffled sob that punctuates the primal gruntings of her three assailants.

ON HOBO #1 - SHOCK CUT

as Shockley literally plucks him into the air from his place in the fracas and shoves his Magnum against his temple.

SHOCKLEY
GET OFF OF HER!!!!!

The remaining two men stare up at him in surprise.

SHOCKLEY
(low)
You bastards move -- you even blink -- your partner's brains are gonna cover half the state.

FLASH CUT - HOBO #3

as in a BLUR of movement he seizes Mally and wraps one arm around her neck. In the other hand he holds the razor, its blade poised over her jugular.

HOBO #3
Fuck yourself, bull! Me 'n' missy, here, we're leavin' together.

SHOCK CUT

The muzzle of Shockley's Magnum barely moves -- EXPLODES IN LENS.

CLOSE ON HOBO #3

A neat round hole appears in the center of his forehead -- inches from Mally's own -- the back of his head blown away in a liquid cloud.

JUMP TO:

EXT. REAR OF TRAIN - TRAVELING

PANNING CAMERA HOLDS as two human forms sail through the air, tumble down the embankment beside the tracks.

CAMERA PUSHES IN as the train rumbles OUT OF SHOT and the SOUND of its clattering wheels dies away.

Shockley is the first to move...crawling tortuously to Mally's motionless form...touching her...

SHOCKLEY
Mally...?

CAMERA SLOWLY PANS AWAY...FOCUS SHIFTING to the town of Barstow, California -- an agglomeration of squat buildings low on the horizon beneath a grey and sullen sky. A low rumble of thunder signals an approaching storm as we --

CUT TO:

EXT. BARSTOW MAIN DRAG - DAY

CAMERA PANS the roadside establishments which flank the small desert town's major highway.

EXT. BARSTOW GREYHOUND BUS DEPOT - DAY

CAMERA CLOSE on a metal shingle hanging from the wall which bears

the familiar silhouette of the speeding race-dog and the lettering:

GREYHOUND BUS LINES

Barstow, Calif.

A gust of wind buffets the shingle; we HEAR the sound of a thunderclap as ANGLE WIDENS. THROUGH the establishment's window, we SEE Shockley addressing a clerk behind his counter, their VOICES drifting out to us:

SHOCKLEY
When's the next bus to L.A.?

CLERK
Next express pulls in at three o'clock.

ANGLE HAS TILTED DOWN to include Mally sitting on the depot's weather-beaten steps. She has combed her hair, washed the dust and dirt from her face — but no impromptu cosmetic can eradicate the effects of their journey -- the punishment she absorbed at the hands of the hoboes. Throughout:

CLERK
You want a ticket?

At the door, Shockley turns, his voice uninflected, enigmatic:

SHOCKLEY
That won't be necessary.

Mally rises from the steps as Shockley pushes through the glass door onto the porch.

MALLY
...I heard. Three o'clock.

He nods. For a moment, both are silent. Whatever spirit she possessed when we first met her -- whatever inner resource -- appears now gone. The trek across the desert...events...life itself...they have wrung her out. In a moment she manages to look at him...to look beyond him and speak -- in a voice devoid of hope, indeed all but devoid of the vital spark of life itself.

MALLY
The whole idea's...insane...

He nods again. Then, wordlessly, he puts an arm around her shoulder and together they walk across the street toward a large brick-fronted building: a Holiday Inn.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

as Shockley and Mally enter. Grey light from outside illuminates the modest, functional room -- soulless as the inside of a Band-Aid box.

Shutting the door, Shockley nods toward the bathroom.

SHOCKLEY
You first.

He moves heavily toward the phone on a bedside table.

SHOCKLEY
I'll get us something to eat. What'll you have?

Mally pauses at the bathroom door. As Shockley picks up the phone their eyes meet for the briefest of moments. Communicated in the look between them is a world of shared pain, mutual exhaustion — a third quantity as yet undefined.

MALLY
Surprise me.

She enters the bathroom.

CAMERA PUSHES IN on Shockley as he eases himself onto the bed and dials. We HEAR the flow of water into the tub in the o.s. bathroom as we --

CUT AWAY TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM - LOS ANGELES - DAY

CAMERA CLOSE on Josie's telephone as one of its buttons flashes and the instrument rings. WIDEN as Josie picks it up.

JOSIE
Josephson here...
(a beat)
Ben?

His eyes dart anxiously to his fellow workers at their desks in b.g., fearful of being overheard.

JOSIE
(hushed; concerned; into phone)
You okay...?

AWAY TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SHOCKLEY

Physical depletion and emotional overload render his voice little more than a raspy whisper:

SHOCKLEY
(into phone)
Listen to me, Josie. I'm coming in.

INTERCUT SHOCKLEY & JOSIE

Shockley in the motel, Josie in the squad room.

JOSIE
Coming in...? Coming in <u>where</u>?

SHOCKLEY
L.A. City Hall.

JOSIE
(horrified)
Ben, for Chrissake, that's nuts!

SHOCKLEY
Write this down...

JOSIE
Ben, you <u>can't</u> -- !

SHOCKLEY
(wearily)
Please, Josie -- get a pencil.

Josie fumbles for a pencil, holds it poised over a pad on his desk.

JOSIE
Okay, Okay, I got the fucker, but --

SHOCKLEY
(interrupting)
DeSoto off-ramp...up Spring Street...
down Olive...straight to City Hall.
You got that?

JOSIE
(scribbling)
DeSoto...Spring...Olive. Yeah, yeah,
I got it, but --

SHOCKLEY
Five minutes after I leave here, Blakelock's gonna hear I'm coming. I know he'll try to stop me, so give him that route -- tell him to clear the streets. At least that way, no innocent people will be killed.

JOSIE
(protesting)
Ben, this is crazy!

SHOCKLEY
And give him this message:
(briefest beat)
Tell him I know why he picked me for the job. Tell him he was wrong. Tell him I'm coming for him. Tell him I'm gonna nail his ass to the wall. You hear me?

JOSIE
(stammering)
Christ, Ben, he'll have every cop on the force out there! You can't just --

SHOCKLEY
(abruptly)
Thanks, partner. Give my best to the wife and kids.

He depresses the button, terminating the conversation.

CAMERA REMAINS ON HIM as he just sits there...finger on the button...phone to his ear.

Then, releasing the button, he dials a single digit as the CAMERA PANS SLOWLY AWAY toward the window...

SHOCKLEY O.S.
(into phone)
Room service? Yeah, this is 314. Send up some food -- steaks -- a bottle of wine.
(an afterthought)
And -- do you have a gift shop?

As LENS PUSHES IN on the window --

SUPERIMPOSE THRU TO:

INT. MOTEL - DAY - SAME SHOT

CAMERA SHOOTS through the motel room's window. Time has passed. The storm, earlier threatening, now drenches the desert floor in a somber, grey drizzle. The distant rumble of thunder, low and portentous, counterpoints the SOUND of:

SHOCKLEY'S VOICE
(reflective - measured)
When I was a kid, I hated cops. Me and the other kids my age, we lived on the streets: on the bricks. Gangs. Fights. Always in trouble. And always -- it seemed -- getting rousted by the cops. We didn't carry guns then, not like gangs today. We couldn't afford them. It was just as well. If I'd had one, I might've shot every cop in sight.

CAMERA SLOWLY WITHDRAWS, commencing an unhurried perusal of the room. First SEEN, resting on the bed, is a large gold-foiled oblong box. Opened, it is empty save for a layer of white tissue and a single leaf from the flowers it contained. Beside it reposes a decorative satin ribbon with an elbaorate red bow. CAMERA MOVES ON as --

SHOCKLEY'S VOICE
(continuing)
But as time went by, my feelings changed. Not because of my parents -- they never really cared. Not because of my teachers -- they had forgotten how to care. It was the cops. It seemed like they were the only people who really gave a damn.

CAMERA LINGERS BRIEFLY on two plastic dry-cleaner's sacks suspended by coat hangers from the open bathroom door: one empty, the other containing Shockley's suit jacket. As CAMERA MOVES ON --

SHOCKLEY'S VOICE
(continuing)
And as I grew a little older, I began to understand what cops were all about. Hell, they weren't after me. They were just doing their jobs, just trying to feed their kids. They were the law. If I broke the law and they caught me, I was booked. Plain and simple. I understood that. I even respected it. And after a while I found myself respecting them. Cops were the only people I knew who stood for something.
(a beat)
Soon as I was old enough, I joined the force.

PANNING STOPS as a portion of Shockley's shoulder ENTERS FRAME partially blocking our view of the table at which he and Mally

are seated, but permitting us to SEE the single candle flickering in its holder...the empty dinner plates...a half-finished bottle of wine...

...and a vase containing a dozen white roses.

SHOCKLEY
(continuing)
When you were growing up, I was out there pounding the bricks -- a rookie. And there was a dream that came with being on the force. A dream that I'd marry a woman I loved, a woman who'd love me...we'd have a family...kids... a home -- all the dumb things people take for granted.

Silent, her clothes freshly cleaned and pressed, her wineglass forgotten in her hand, Mally's eyes reflect the candlelight as she listens.

SHOCKLEY
(continuing)
And I dreamed of the big case that was going to come...that I was going to break wide open and they'd give me Captain's stripes. You know?

CAMERA has dollied around to include them both -- the roses on one side. There is only the quiet and introspective sound of Shockley's voice, the soft patter of raindrops against the window. All sense of time and place are gone -- a protracted moment in the rhythms of eternity.

SHOCKLEY
(continuing)
After a while I got my gold shield -- my detective's badge. I was still on the bricks, but it didn't matter: that big case was still out there waiting to break, and that girl was bound to come along. The years drifted by. And somewhere, sometime...I don't know when... the dream-feeling didn't happen any more. -- It got to be a job. I watched other men break the big case...saw them getting married...having kids...and I was still out there. On the bricks.
(brief beat)
It was like standing still and watching the world go by.

She extends a hand, rests it lightly on his. The candle flickering on the table plays across his face -- the contours of fatigue and disillusionment. He idly shrugs.

SHOCKLEY
Since then, not much has happened... and the only dream I've had is to stick it out long enough to draw my retirement.

Rising, he absently extracts a cigarette from his pack, turns toward the window.

The CAMERA PUSHES IN on the reflection of the rain-streaked glass against his face...its patterns shifting and kaleidoscopic -- elusive, ephemeral.

SHOCKLEY
And now, instead of breaking the big case...I get picked to go down with it.

ANGLE SHIFTS to include Mally as she studies him from where she sits, digesting what he has said. In a moment:

MALLY
You don't have to. Neither of us does. Nobody's making us go back to L.A. We can go to Mexico...Canada ...anywhere.

SHOCKLEY
(wry - without turning)
Sure. And live like kings.

MALLY
I've got money -- my checkbook -- I've got five thousand dollars back in Vegas.

He merely nods.

SHOCKLEY
And when that ran out...?

MALLY
Then let's use the money to buy a pickup truck -- an old sedan -- something unobtrusive, for God's sake. We can take the back roads...turn ourselves in to a precinct station or something. Anything but City Hall. We'll ask for protective custody -- talk to the D.A. --

SHOCKLEY
(turning)
That's exactly what I want you to do.

She stares at him as if uncertain she had truly heard what he said.

MALLY
What about you?

SHOCKLEY
(simply)
I'm going in.

MALLY
Why???

Shockley meets her eyes only briefly, turns back to the window.

SHOCKLEY
We both know why Blakelock picked me.
(a beat)
I want to prove he was wrong.

MALLY
Then I'm going with you.

SHOCKLEY
No, you're not. As of now, you're free. You're not my prisoner any more. Take off...get your money... disappear.
(a beat)
This is just between me and Blakelock.

MALLY
You said yourself you didn't think it would work.

SHOCKLEY
At least someone'll know I tried.

MALLY
Who? Blakelock?

SHOCKLEY
No. Me.

She stares at his back. A tense wall of silence descends. Finally, with a small moue of determination, she seizes the phone.

ON SHOCKLEY

staring at the rainfall outside the window, his eyes unfocused on the desert beyond. Dimly, O.S., we are aware of Mally's voice as she asks for a New York number.

FAVORING MALLY

as her connection is made and she speaks into the phone -- her tones buoyant:

MALLY
Mom? ...Hi, it's me.

Shockley half-turns from the window, frowns. Her motives in placing the call are as perplexing to him as her attitude of cheerfulness. She meets his eyes, a steely determination to her gaze -- indeed a challenge -- that contrasts markedly with her obvious pleasure at hearing her mother's voice.

MALLY
...I'm fine. How are you?
(a pause)
Good. And Daddy?
(a pause - then)
Jeeeesus, Mom, he's been complaining about that for years. He ought to see a specialist -- not that quack he's been going to.
(a beat - a sigh)
Okay, that's just my opinion.
(a beat)
Me? I'm in Barstow. ...Barstow. It's a little town halfway between Las Vegas and Los Angeles.

Her eyes remain fixed on Shockley's as --

MALLY
(continuing - into phone)
No, I quit that job. Like, who wants to be a secretary all her life, you know what I mean?

One senses that her lie has its basis not in shame, but in an innate respect for her parents' peace of mind. Her voice -- in truth her entire persona -- conveys an optimism, an affirmative ingenuousness far removed from Shockley's dulled and silent gloom.

MALLY
...Anyway, the big news is, I met this man. He's terrific. I mean what can I tell you? I mean you'd love him, Mom.

Her eyes hold unflinchingly on Shockley's. He stares at her, incredulous, as she continues:

MALLY
(a beat)
Shockley. Ben Shockley.

Shockley doesn't move. He just stares.

MALLY
(into phone)
...Mom, what's it matter what church he goes to? We love each other. We're going to get married. We're going to live in California and settle down and have kids.
(a beat)
Well, we really haven't decided...but maybe up in northern California...near the redwoods. You can still buy land up there and it's supposed to be beautiful.
(a beat)
When? -- Oh. Well, we have to clear up some business first in L.A., and then we'll get married. ...What? -- Jeeesus, Mom, I don't feel like inviting three dozen people.
(a beat)
Mom, I just wanted you to know. Yes, just like it sounds: S-h-o-c-k-l- ...Yes, that's right. Mom, tell Daddy, will you? I love you. Yes. Goodbye.

She hangs up.

It is over.

Her eyes remain riveted to Shockley's; there is neither guilt nor uncertainty in them. After a moment, she dials the desk.

MALLY
(into phone)
Get me 283-8779 in Las Vegas, please.

SHOCKLEY
(numbly)
...maybe near the redwoods, huh...

She does not respond, her attention on the phone call. Shortly --

MALLY
(into phone)
Bernie? -- Yeah, it's me.
(pause)
Listen, what's the line on that horse...Mally-No-Show?
(a beat)
100-to-1? Dynamite. I want five thousand dollars' worth. Got it? -- Yeah. You know I'm good for it. Okay? -- Yes...on the nose. She's going to be a winner.

She hangs up, crosses to the table, removes the roses from the vase beneath Shockley's non-plussed gaze. Shaking the moisture from the flower-stems, she lovingly replaces the roses in their box, tucks it under an arm.

Only now does she turn to Shockley.

MALLY
Let's go.

CLOSE ON SHOCKLEY

Overwhelmed.

CUT TO:

DAY EXTERIOR

The air is rent by a savage streak of lightning, the senses POUNDED by the roar of thunder. Rain pelts down in torrents.

EXT. GREYHOUND DEPOT - DAY

The Greyhound shingle sways on its bracket, rattling with the force of the downpour.

INSIDE GREYHOUND BUS - DAY

as the bus comes to a stop outside the Barstow depot. CAMERA SHOOTS through the windshield, wipers clicking, as several passengers descend. Then, reaching for the lever to close the door -- the DRIVER reacts to what he sees, O.S.:

DRIVER
What the hell do you think you're doing???!!!

PAST THE DRIVER - THROUGH THE DOOR

Revealing Shockley standing in the rain, his magnum trained at the driver's belly.

SHOCKLEY
What the hell does it look like I'm doing?

DRIVER
This is a goddam Greyhound bus!

SHOCKLEY
I don't give a shit if it's the Queen Elizabeth. Take your hand off that lever.

As the driver obeys, Mally materializes beside Shockley and together they hurriedly board the bus. Handing her his magnum, he frisks the apoplectic Driver.

Still clutching her box of roses under one arm, Mally turns to the score of PASSENGERS who occupy the Greyhound whose expressions range from mindless astonishment to wordless terror.

MALLY
(the efficient stewardess)
We apologize for this inconvenience, ladies and gentlemen, but at this time I'm afraid I have to ask you all to leave the bus. Please make sure you have all your belongings, and I promise you arrangements will be made for your continued journey as quickly as possible.

Immobilized with uncertainty, they fidget.

MALLY
(crisply)
Haul ass.

She swings the pistol in a menacing arc. The passengers move.

INSIDE DEPOT

On the floor behind the counter we SEE the clerk to whom Shockley spoke earlier. He strains against the ropes which connect his ankles and wrists behind his back...his angry grunts muffled by a gag around his mouth.

CAMERA TILTS UP to SHOOT through the window as outside, the first of the dazed, apprehensive passengers step down from the bus.

EXT. DEPOT - THE BUS

The passengers huddle in the rain, Shockley and Mally descending into their midst. Retrieving his weapon, Shockley brandishes it at a few of the men, barking orders as he moves to the Greyhound's cargo doors.

SHOCKLEY
You with the arms -- help me with these doors. You, you and you -- get this baggage out of here.

The final passenger to disembark, a LITTLE OLD LADY pauses beside Mally long enough to impart:

LITTLE OLD LADY
This is so exciting. Just like on the news!

AWAY TO:

INT. CITY HALL CORRIDOR (LOS ANGELES) - DAY

CAMERA CLOSE on the closed courtroom doors, seen earlier, as they are opened from within. Feyderspiel -- appearing irked -- is ushered through the doors by a Deputy Marshal who simply points O.S.

Josie is revealed there, a humble supplicant, as ANGLE WIDENS.

FEYDERSPIEL
(approaching)
You wanted to see me?

JOSIE
Yessir, I -- my name is Josephson, Metro Squad, and I --

FEYDERSPIEL
Look, Josephson, I'm in court. I have a case to prosecute. Whatever it is will have to wait until --

JOSIE
(interrupting)
It's about Shockley, sir. Ben Shockley. I just talked to him and --

At the sound of Shockley's name, Feyderspiel reacts.

FEYDERSPIEL
You actually spoke to him?

JOSIE
Yessir. He's coming into town. Gave me his route. He's -- he's said some things about Commander Blakelock. I just didn't know who else to approach in the matter -- I --

The importance of the judicial proceedings suddenly pales in Feyderspiel's mind; he gives Josie's hand a conspiratorial squeeze:

FEYDERSPIEL
You couldn't have chosen a better time. This may be just the break I need.

So polished is his tone that no ordinary man could doubt his sincerity. As Josie commences explaining the predicament --

AWAY TO:

A BLACK SCREEN

CRASH! -- a rotted wooden door gives way, Shockley lifting it up and back on rusty hinges to reveal the dark interior of an auto body shop.

FULL SHOT - BODY SHOP

Shockley turns to three burly male passengers, his shanghaied assistants.

SHOCKLEY
(pointing inside shop)
Those sheets of quarter-inch -- they go inside the bus. These, too --

He hauls the spider-web-draped tanks of an oxyacetylene rig from a corner, shoves them forward. Two of the men pick up one of the flats of sheet-metal, the third clumsily dragging the oxyacetylene rig out of the shed and into the rain.

AWAY TO:

INT. CITY HALL (LOS ANGELES) - DAY - SPLIT SCREEN

SCREEN LEFT is Feyderspiel, ensconced in the same phone booth as when first seen; SCREEN RIGHT is Blakelock, behind his office desk, as -- for the first time -- the collusion between them is expressed in visual terms.

Speaking into their respective phones:

BLAKELOCK
(grim)
Get your ass up here.

FEYDERSPIEL
That's impossible, sir. We mustn't be seen together.

BLAKELOCK
But we've got to think...talk. I mean, what's this Josephson know...?

FEYDERSPIEL
Nothing that can hurt us. Yet.

BLAKELOCK
Why would Shockley give us his fucking route, for Chrissake?

FEYDERSPIEL
I haven't had time to melt it down.

BLAKELOCK
A ruse...a ploy. He's trying to manipulate us into thinking --

FEYDERSPIEL
No, I think he's on the level. I'll call you again as quickly as I can.

BLAKELOCK
You do that, Feyderspiel, before the whole bucket blows up in our face! Get the trial adjourned. Have a heart attack. Perjure yourself. Just get your ass up to this office! Shockley's got to be stopped. Stopped hard.

As Feyderspiel hangs up the phone --

DIRECT CUT TO:

THE FLARE OF A TORCH

as Shockley extinguishes it. PULLING BACK we SEE the fortification he has build around the driver's seat of the Greyhound -- a literal turret of sheet-metal enclosing the upper half of the seat on all four sides, a space on top, a crawl-space beneath, and a small, cutaway "window" through which he may see to drive.

Removing a welder's mask from his face, he turns to Mally who stands nearby. Her eyes move from Shockley to the turret, back to Shockley.

Neither speaks.

INT. DEPOT - DAY

Most of the passengers cluster at the windows, seemingly more intrigued with their plight then anxious to escape from it. In b.g., we SEE and HEAR the clerk -- untied, ungagged -- fairly hopping with rage as he shouts a narrative of the hijacking into his phone, blistering the ear of a far-off Greyhound dispatcher.

INT. BUS - DAY - SHOCKLEY & MALLY

Crawling under the steel plate, Shockley settles into the driver's seat. He and Mally exchange a look over the top of the steel turret.

SHOCKLEY
All set?

MALLY
All set.

Shockley hits the ignition.

EXT. THE BUS

The door hisses shut, sealing the two inside.

SEVERAL BRIEF CUTS

THE ENGINE throbs, exhaust thundering from the pipes.

SHOCKLEY manipulates the heavy gear-shift.

HIS FOOT descends on the big accelerator.

FULL SHOT - THE BUS

With a ROAR the Scenicruiser lurches backward.

INSIDE THE BUS

Mally is all but thrown from her feet as:

SHOCKLEY
Shit.

CLOSE SHOT

He works the gears, struggling with their unfamiliar pattern.

INSERT

His foot again descends on the accelerator.

LONG SHOT - THE SCENICRUSIER

Engine roaring, it surges forward onto the highway.

LOW ANGLE

The huge tires churn PAST LENS, CAMERA PANNING the bus down the rain-slick road.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE HQ (LOS ANGELES) - MAIN SWITCHBOARD - DAY

TEN OFFICERS field calls at the mammoth switchboard, the atmosphere HUMMING with the sound of their voices, the insistent BUZZING of incoming calls, the click and rattle of patch-plugs in busy hands. FOCUS PULLS to the nearest OFFICER as he answers an outside call:

OFFICER
(into his headset)
Police, Central.

He listens to the spoken data, reacting with disbelief --

OFFICER
Hijacked a what...?

On his look --

EXT. HIGHWAY - OPEN DESERT - THE BUS

CAMERA SHOOTING toward the bus, CRANING UP SLOWLY with its passage, PANNING with it on its Westbound run.

The SOUND of the vehicle's engine is LOUD F.G., the CAMERA CONTINUING UP AND BACK until the bus is a distant, moving speck far off and down below. The highway is seen as a slender black ribbon -- a thread uniting nowhere with infinity -- stretched across the landscape, straight as a die.

Except for the rain, the VIEW is precisely the same as that from Shockley's airplane window, twenty-four hours earlier. Now, the SOUND of the airplane's engine is that of the Scenicruiser's diesel -- resembling nothing so much as a roll of drums...low... rhythmic...ineluctably approaching destiny.

CUT TO:

INT. CITY HALL - BLAKELOCK & FEYDERSPIEL - SPLIT SCREEN

Feyderspiel stands calmly inside the downstairs phone booth, Blakelock pacing the confines of his office like a cornered animal beset by jackals. He directs his remarks toward his intercom:

BLAKELOCK
Barstow...L.A. -- it's one hundred miles of goddam desert...two hours on that road...we could, ahh, blast that bus to hell...a sitting duck, you know? Call Vegas...the boys...have them do it... blow the shit out of it, I mean.

Feyderspiel hesitates -- the voice of reason, logic and bald fact. Speaking into the telephone:

FEYDERSPIEL
Yessir, I could place that call, but the boys just don't do that kind of job. -- It's too high profile.

BLAKELOCK
But they're our...I mean they're with us, not against us, right?

FEYDERSPIEL
Yessir, but we're talking about a Greyhound Scenicruiser on a public highway. That'd be big news. Our friends in Vegas are, well...embarrassed by that kind of coverage.

BLAKELOCK
(grasping)
Well, then, our boys...cops... deputy sheriffs...Highway Patrol. We've got heavy weapons, don't we? Bazookas...? Have the assholes, you know...I mean, show some balls... blow him away, for Chrissake.

FEYDERSPIEL
With all respect, sir, the San Bernardino is a well-traveled freeway. We don't want blood and tennis rackets all over the asphalt.

BLAKELOCK
Screw it! A few casualties...

FEYDERSPIEL
Sir, if there are any casualties other than Shockley and the girl, someone will be answerable: you.

BLAKELOCK
(gruffly)
I'll make the decisions.
(a beat)
What are the...any other options?

FEYDERSPIEL
I suggest we let Shockley drive right on into the city. After all, we have his route. We employ a two-phase plan. We use his friend... Josephson...to lay a trap. That's phase one. Phase two: we clear the streets along his route...deploy our men...create an impossible barrier... a gauntlet, if you will. He won't have a chance.

Blakelock's eyes shift suspiciously to his intercom whence issues Feyderspiel's voice -- as if doubting any intellect but his own but yet not independent of them...

BLAKELOCK
That would work, wouldn't it? I mean, we could control the media, then, too. We'd appear justified...getting him that way. It would be a feather in our caps...

FEYDERSPIEL
(a nod)
Excellent thinking.

The ideal sycophant, his tone attributes the entire scheme to Blakelock's brillance.

BLAKELOCK
Then that's the plan. Can you handle, I mean...arrange the thing with his friend?

FEYDERSPIEL
Josephson, sir. Yessir. I'll put it in the works right now.

CUT TO:

EXT. VARIOUS POLICE HQ'S - VARIOUS SHOTS - DAY

The rainstorm confined to the desert, a stream of black-and-whites deploy onto dry L.A. City streets from the motor pool. No sirens. No flashing lights. No fanfare. OVER SHOT:

BLAKELOCK'S VOICE
(via radiophone - filtered)
...I repeat to all units: station yourselves as requested. Battalion Captains will be taking their orders from this office, and this office only. Contingency 91. Do you copy?

INSIDE A SQUAD CAR - DAY

A grey-haired VETERAN at the wheel of the moving car, his ROOKIE PARTNER beside him. The Rookie looks up from his detail sheet, addresses the Veteran:

ROOKIE
(strained)
We're supposed to do this to one of our own men?

VETERAN
You heard the Commander, didn't you?

ROOKIE
But it don't make any sense. I mean, if this guy's the mad-dog killer Blakelock says -- why the hell would he supply us with his route?

PUSH IN on the Veteran's face. It is clear from his expression that the same question has occurred to him and he has come up with no satisfactory answer. Grim-faced and silent, he continues to drive.

EXT. DOWNTOWN INTERSECTION - DAY

as the convoy is joined by four additional squad cars that arrive from other directions.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE BUS - TRAVELING - FAVORING SHOCKLEY

The rain has stopped; sunlight reflects off Shockley's face. His eyes are on the highway ahead, the ANGLE SHIFTING to include Mally who stands next to the driver's seat, beside Shockley's makeshift turret. We HEAR the steady drone of the engine, the wheels on the asphalt. An apprehensive silence prevails. Finally:

MALLY
What do you think they'll do to us?

SHOCKLEY
(tight)
-- Whatever Blakelock tells them.

She reflects on this a moment, then:

MALLY
Isn't there somebody who can stop him? The Chief? The Commissioner?

SHOCKLEY
Blakelock's head of internal affairs. Internal affairs is the watchdog of the Bureau. Blakelock's a big man. Whatever he says, they'll believe.
(grimly)
He could put an army on the streets and nobody'd ask him why.

Both are silent for a time. Eventually --

MALLY
You do want kids, don't you?

The off-the-wall wistfulness of her remark evokes a sad grin from him.

SHOCKLEY
(nods)
Kids...house...car...swimming pool...you name it.

MALLY
(dreaming)
Someplace with trees? Someplace not with neighbors right next door? -- With hills to walk in?

SHOCKLEY
Horses...a greenhouse, maybe...

MALLY
...maybe a little guest-house in back... and maybe even a...

SHOCKLEY
...a what...?

Her expression betrays the encroachment of reality.

MALLY
(shakes her head)
Nothing.

They are both aware of the futility of it all. Both fall silent. Ultimately:

MALLY
You don't even know if I'm good in bed.

SHOCKLEY
I'll take it on faith.

Keeping his eyes on the road, he reaches up, takes her hand in his own.

AWAY TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAY - HIGH ANGLE

PANNING SHOT encompasses the length and breadth of Spring St. A score of squad cars traverses its length, a pair of them detaching from the rest and coming to a stop in such a way as to block effectively the side streets leading into Spring.

AT AN INTERSECTION

Uniformed police deploy from their car, diverting vehicle traffic.

A MUNICIPAL TRUCK

advances from intersection to intersection, its workers lowering municipal wooden roadblock barriers to the cops who are stationed at each corner.

ANOTHER INTERSECTION

Auto horns BLARE as drivers find further progress toward Spring St. impeded by a clot of police, the wooden barriers.

PANNING SHOT - A SQUAD CAR

It cruises the length of another downtown street, Olive. As it advances, its LOUDHAILER crackles:

VOICE FROM LOUDHAILER
Clear this street. This is a police emergency. All pedestrians please clear the street immediately. Clear the street under penalty of arrest. This is a police emergency.

AT AN INTERSECTION

CAMERA PANS with a further detail of black-and-whites as they veer from the main flotilla and advance down an adjacent side street.

Methodically, purposively, efficient as a well-oiled machine, they block off all but a predetermined route of access to the very heart of the city.

AWAY TO:

INT. SQUAD CAR - JOSIE

Driving, watching apprehensively the massive deployment of barricades and police along the city streets.

AWAY TO:

EXT. SAN BERNARDINO FREEWAY - DAY

CAMERA PANS with a big white-on-green freeway sign, ZOOMING IN on the letters:

DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

RIGHT LANE

INT. THE BUS - ON SHOCKLEY

His foot hits the brake.

HIGH ANGLE - THE FREEWAY - THE BUS

Inbound traffic, the bus in its midst, is rapidly coming to a

halt. OVERHEAD SHOT permits us instantly to see why: the four vehicular lanes are blocked by a pair of black-and-whites parked crosswise on the freeway.

INSIDE THE BUS

as it rapidly decelerates.

MALLY
What's the matter?

SHOCKLEY
Roadblock.

He twists the wheel to the right.

HIGH ANGLE - THE BUS

as it darts between a pair of civilian sedans and gains the right-hand lane, otherwise deserted.

LOW ANGLE - THE FREEWAY

Autos coming to a stop LARGE IN F.G. ...only the bus still in motion, indeed gathering speed, approaching LENS, engine SURGING.

AT THE ROADBLOCK

We SEE the four uniformed OFFICERS who have exited their parked patrol cars and now man the wooden barriers. Flares burn brightly on the asphalt as the SOUND of the approaching bus GAINS IN VOLUME.

INSIDE THE BUS

Speeding toward the cops and the roadblock, Shockley gropes for his Magnum, snaps a command:

SHOCKLEY
Hit the deck!

Mally drops.

AT THE ROADBLOCK - THE COPS - THE BUS

The bus a ROARING PRESENCE IN F.G., one of the cops calmly steps forward and waves it on through, past the roadblock.

INSIDE THE BUS

FAVORING SHOCKLEY as he lets out a pent-up breath, lays the pistol across his lap. Mally rises uncertainly, looks back and O.S. at the roadblock.

MALLY
They let us through?

SHOCKLEY
They don't want innocent people hurt. Look down there --

He indicates the freeway ahead of them.

LONG SHOT - INBOUND FREEWAY - HIS ANGLE

Empty. Cleared of all traffic.

BACK TO SCENE

SHOCKLEY
(grim)
That's where our welcoming committee will greet us.

MALLY
(on impulse)
Can't we just keep going? Maybe they'd never stop us. Maybe we could -- just go, and --

SHOCKLEY
(softly)
Nag, nag, nag...

FAVORING MALLY

looking out at the ominous, desolate no-man's-land ahead of them.

MALLY
(low - bitterly)
It's not fair...we never even had a goddam honeymoon...

DIRECT CUT TO:

EXT. A DOWNTOWN STREET - FREEWAY OFF-RAMP - DAY

The place is deserted, a shabby urban capillary where rundown

buildings rusticate in the shadow of the freeway. A lone black-and-white rolls silently to a stop INTO FRAME, parking at the base of the freeway off-ramp.

Its sole occupant -- Josie -- kills the engine, gets out from behind the wheel. Listening, we HEAR only the sough of stale air through the street.

Josie glances at the off-ramp...then at his watch.

AWAY TO:

LONG SHOT - CITY HALL

The LENS ZOOMING IN on an upper story window --

INT. CITY HALL - BLAKELOCK & FEYDERSPIEL - SPLIT SCREEN

To SCREEN RIGHT, CAMERA TIGHT on Blakelock as he clutches his phone to his ear. His eyes shift nervously, defenseless against the phantoms of his mind. He speaks in a whisper:

BLAKELOCK
Suppose he gets through?

To SCREEN LEFT, CAMERA TIGHT on Feyderspiel in the hermetic womb of his phone booth.

FEYDERSPIEL
He can't get through.

BLAKELOCK
He's gotten this far, hasn't he?

FEYDERSPIEL
How many units have you deployed? Four dozen? Five? And at the off-ramp -- those two SWAT men are the finest marksmen on the force.

BLAKELOCK
Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know, but what happens...I mean, there'll be hell to pay if something, you know, goes wrong.

FEYDERSPIEL
The only thing that could possibly go wrong is if your spit-and-polish disciples suddenly decide they can't shoot down a fellow officer.

BLAKELOCK
They're cops. The bastards're paid to shoot, not think.

FEYDERSPIEL
Then we have no problem.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOSIE'S RENDEZVOUS - DAY

We HEAR the sound of an approaching engine. Detaching himself from the side of his squad car, Josie looks up towards the off-ramp, B.G., as the Scenicruiser appears at the crest, heading downward.

Josie waves his arms in a greeting.

INSIDE THE BUS

as Mally reacts to the vision of the solitary man at the base of the off-ramp, forty yards away.

MALLY
Who's that?

SHOCKLEY
(frowns)
Josie...

FULL SHOT - BOTTOM OF OFF-RAMP - DAY

Josie continues waving his arms as the bus decellerates, brakes HISSING intermittently as Shockley brings the Scenicruiser to a halt directly behind Josie's black-and-white.

Not another soul is in sight.

INSIDE THE BUS

Shockley climbs under his barrier and activates the lever controlling the door. As it opens with a plosive sigh, Josie hurries to the bus, enters.

Seeing Shockley's makeshift turret, he reacts --

JOSIE
Jeeeesus...!

SHOCKLEY
What're you doing here?

With a cursory glance at Mally, Josie turns to his friend.

JOSIE
Ben, you don't have to do this. We've got a friend in City Hall.

SHOCKLEY
(suspicious)
Who?

JOSIE
(in a rush of words)
Feyderspiel -- the prosecutor on the DeLucca case. I told him what you said about Blakelock. He's promised to help. Said he'd personally defend you if you can prove your point.

SHOCKLEY
Forget it. I don't trust anybody connected with the DeLucca case.

JOSIE
Dammit, didn't you hear me? He's the prosecutor! It's him who's prepared the whole case against Blakelock.

Mally steps to Shockley's side, the faintest glimmer of hope in her eyes.

MALLY
(quietly)
Ben...maybe he's the one: that one person with the guts to go up against Blakelock....

SHOCKLEY
(agitated)
And maybe they're in bed together! Maybe the whole thing's rigged -- prepare the case, blow it, forget it. The whole trial could be a fucking smokescreen!

JOSIE
Ben, listen to me. I've met the guy.
(MORE)

JOSIE (CONT'D)
He's okay. Take my word for it. Besides, you've got no choice. Blakelock's got half the force out there waiting for this elephant to show.

SHOCKLEY
Where?

JOSIE
Broadway...Spring...Olive...the whole route you gave me. The place is swarming with black-and-whites.
(gesturing the turret)
Hell, even with this pig-iron, it's suicide.
(a plea)
Transfer to my car -- stay low in back. I'll smuggle you into City Hall -- the back door. Feyderspiel and I have doped it all out. We take the service elevator to his office. He says to keep your gun. Says if you think you're being crossed, you can use him as your hostage to get away again.
(fervently)
Ben, for Chrissake, the guy's laying his life on the line for you.

Josie's words...his sincerity...weaken Shockley's resolve. He glances uncertainly to Mally.

SHOCKLEY
What do you think?

MALLY
(pause - then)
I think it's worth a try.

A brief moment passes between them before Shockley slowly nods.

SHOCKLEY
Okay.

He turns back to Josie.

SHOCKLEY
Josie...meet Gus Mally.

Josie assesses the proud, affirmative figure she presents, regards them both. He smiles.

JOSIE
Let's go.

Together, they step down from the bus.

EXT. THE BUS - FREEWAY OFF-RAMP - DAY

as the three of them emerge from the bus.

CAMERA HOLDS...then TILTS UP toward a rooftop overlooking the scene.

We SEE something move.

ON SHOCKLEY, MALLY, JOSIE

as they walk toward Josie's waiting car...

ON THE ROOFTOP

A PAIR OF SWAT MARKSMEN lie prone atop the roof. They bring their rifles to bear.

MARKSMAN #1
(hushed)
Target.

EXT. OFF-RAMP - BRIEF CUT

PANNING Josie, Shockley and Mally as they arrive at Josie's black-and-white.

ON THE ROOFTOP - THE SWAT MEN

Aiming.

MARKSMAN #1
(whispered)
Pull.

ON THE SIDEWALK

Several things happen at once. Almost gallantly, Josie reaches forward to open the front door for Mally. In doing so, he interposes his body between the marksmen, above and O.S., and Shockley. At that precise moment, several shots ring out. Mally screams as Josie topples, Shockley catching him while yelling:

SHOCKLEY
The bus!

Mally darts toward the bus as several further SHOTS ring out. One hits Shockley -- somewhere, for we HEAR his gasp of pain -- while the others thud into Josie's body which Shockley is dragging desperately toward the Scenicruiser.

ON THE ROOFTOP

as the two marksmen fire additional SHOTS.

ON THE SIDEWALK

Mally rushes INTO FRAME, with startling strength pulling Shockley behind the cover of the bus and away from Josie's lifeless form as bullets WHINE from the concrete.

MALLY
He's dead! Leave him! He's dead!!!

INSIDE THE BUS

For an agonizing moment it appears that Shockley will return into VIEW of the marksmen to carry Josie from the field of fire -- but under Mally's pounding fists he whirls and claws his way through the bus's door and into his turret.

SEVERAL CUTS

SHOCKLEY'S HANDS as they wrench the big steering wheel.

HIS FOOT as it descends on the gas.

THE GEAR SHIFT as it is shoved into low.

LOW ANGLE

The engine ROARS, the tires mightily revolve...and the bus pulls away from the curb.

ON THE ROOFTOP

The marksmen pivot with the bus's trajectory, squeezing off additional SHOTS.

AT THE BUS - CLOSE SHOT - PANNING

One or two of the rounds puncture the driver's side window... others ricocheting off metal.

INSIDE THE BUS

The slugs penetrate the window...spattering on Shockley's turret as the engine SURGES.

FULL SHOT - THE STREET

as the bus pulls off and away in a cloud of diesel exhaust... abandoning the scene of the ambush...

...and Josie's lifeless body on the off-ramp in a pool of blood.

AWAY TO:

INSIDE THE BUS - ON SHOCKLEY

Driving, his knuckles white on the wheel.

SHOCKLEY
They killed him. The sons of bitches killed him. Feyderspiel. It was Feyderspiel. Him and Blakelock.

He turns to Mally huddled beside him, beside the steel plating of his turret.

SHOCKLEY
Hang on. We're going in.

HIGH ANGLE - INTERSECTION

As the bus makes the turn and ploughs down the street perpendicular to the ambush.

The street is deserted, devoid of human life. A wasteland.

AWAY TO:

ANOTHER STREET

Similarly empty of all traffic. Desolate. Silent...

...save for the rustle of a sandwich wrapper as the city winds impel it down the asphalt...

...and now, dimly audible, the SOUND of the approaching bus.

NEW ANGLE

And now we SEE that the street is not deserted. An officer has taken cover in a doorway on the north side of the street, pistol in his hand.

A second officer lurks in the adjacent doorway, holding a rifle.

And now, as CAMERA PANS, we SEE that every doorway -- every conceivable place of concealment along the north side of the street -- is occupied by a policeman...armed and ready.

The SOUND of the bus is growing louder.

CLOSE SHOT - A COP

He checks the loads in his shotgun. SOUND of the bus's engine RISING...

CLOSE SHOT - ANOTHER COP

Nervous, he shifts his weight, wipes dampness from his face. SOUND of the bus's engine RISING...

CLOSE SHOT - THIRD COP

Idly studying his revolver with something akin to remorse. SOUND of the bus's engine ROARS, and --

LONG SHOT

It THUNDERS into view around a corner at the distant end of the block.

VARIOUS CUTS - POLICEMEN

Readying their weapons.

MED. SHOT - COMMANDING OFFICER

as he raises a bullhorn.

INSIDE THE BUS - ON SHOCKLEY

He shouts above the DIN of the engine:

SHOCKLEY
Hit the deck!

ON MALLY - BRIEF CUT

Flattening herself against the floor of the bus.

ON SHOCKLEY

He downshifts savagely.

ON HIS FOOT

as he floors the accelerator. Inescapable is our VIEW of his lower leg -- the bloody hole in his trousers above the calf -- the trickle of blood that dampens the pedal, staining it crimson.

ON THE BUS - LOW ANGLE

It THUNDERS down the street toward LENS.

BRIEF CUT - COMMANDER

Eyes fixed on the enemy...bullhorn at his lips.

BRIEF CUT - THE BUS

Its horn BLARES a drawn-out brazen challenge!

BRIEF CUT - COMMANDER

COMMANDER
(into bullhorn)
Open fire!

ON THE BUS - PANNING

As it reaches the initial stretch of the gauntlet and the men open fire.

THE GAUNTLET - MONTAGE - SLOW MOTION

A Scenicruiser is not exactly a kiddie-car. It is eighteen feet tall, eight feet wide, forty feet long and weighs twenty-six thousand pounds. It has three axles, eight size 22.5 heavy-duty tires, ultra-thick shatterproof glass windows, and it is made to stand up indefinitely under half a million miles' service. It has a mammoth diesel engine housed behind heavy alloy siding in the rear of the vehicle. A Scenicruiser simply does not break down. It might as well be a tank.

Traveling at sixty miles an hour, weighing thirteen tons, the equation for sheer mass is staggering. It traverses a half mile in roughly thirty seconds, and as it roars past the blazing guns we see it absorb on the order of four hundred gunshots. To be sure, most of these would harmlessly pierce its windows and its chrome alloy luggage bays. Many would ricochet off Shockley's sheet metal turret. Few would pierce the engine compartment, since the best angle at the engine compartment is from the rear, and to shoot at the rear of the bus would oblige the police to shoot at a tangent perilously close to their own forces -- and this they have been told not to do. Most modern police carry Magnums, since men of experience know that even a .38 cannot be relied upon to stop an angry drunk in his tracks. It has been rumored that a slug from a Magnum will pierce the engine block of an automobile, but only if it is a steel jacketed slug. Police, who commonly shoot at men instead of cars, prefer the hollowpoint -- a lead, non-jacketed slug of questionable legality but guaranteed killing ability, since it spreads out upon impact with human viscera.

But a hollowpoint is simply not very effective against metal. And as for riot-guns loaded with shot, well...these weapons were never intended for us against Scenicruisers.

And so it is that the bus -- in that eternal heartbeat of its plunge through the first stretch of the gauntlet does not stop...and it has traversed no more than half the length of the block when the police SEE that it's not going to stop, fire away though they might.

And their awe is wonderful to behold.

Such is the scheme of things outside the bus. Inside, to a pair of human beings caught in the type of fusillade we describe, the experience would seem interminable; the noise alone would numb the senses.

And so it is --

INSIDE THE BUS - WITH SHOCKLEY & MALLY

He who has not inhabited a foxhole under fire can hardly imagine the primal truths to which mortal flesh is heir. It is not uncommon for strong men to void both bladder and bowels -- and often it is not mere refuse which the body abandons, but reason itself. Warfare has a way of snapping that divine link between sanity and soma, reducing -- sometimes permanently -- its victims to that raw and naked psychosis euphemistically known as 'shell shock.' A technical term for the cause of that psychosis is 'sensory overload,' and what it means is that the system is simply subjected to more sense input than it can tolerate. We become animals, in the most basic biological meaning of the word.

Thus it is with Shockley and Mally, particularly with the girl, who is not protected, as he is, by a fortification of cold steel. Supine on the aisle floor, there is no escape.

The noise alone is alien to human life. In addition to the O.S. CRACKING of pistols and BOOMING of shotguns, our ears are deafened by the steam-drill RAT TAT TAT of bullets as they hit the Scenicruiser's metal sides, the stacatto SHATTERING of glass as slugs rip through the safety-windows in whirring multitudes, the incessant WHINE of their ricochet off metal surfaces of the bus's interior. Added to this grotesque cacophony is the unremitting ROAR of the engine as Shockley feeds gas, goes through the gears. Withal, it is a symphony from Hell, above which Mally's YELL is little more than the piercing obbligato of a secondary woodwind.

Clapping her hands to her ears, features distorted by the sheer VOLUME OF NOISE, her body twists as if to press itself into the very substance of the rocking, vibrating floor -- attempting the impossible in an organic plea for surcease; when this fails, her limbs involuntarily contract, drawing her supple, vulnerable form into that compact and universal posture from which all mankind must disengage itself in order to be born. And with the final betrayal -- when even that proves futile, when to the horrendous and incessant THUNDER that surrounds her is added the utter and inescapable panic of imminent extinction -- an innate and quintessential terror -- when repeated YELLS are throttled

by excessive helplessness, reduced into choking, gasping sobs -- her system cries out in silent agony, her body quivers, trembles like that of an infant rabbit in traumatic shock, begging in some primeval way for the coup de grace that will once and forever terminate all suffering.

THE BUS

SEEN as it nears the end of the block and the barriers erected there, a shattered parody of what it was. Though its engine BELLOWS, the gunfire is slackening.

ANGLE - A COP

lowering his weapon with a trace of surprise that the thing is still moving.

VARIOUS CUTS - OTHER COPS

as they watch it retreat around the corner -- bemused.

COMMANDING OFFICER - BRIEF CUT

He raises a two-way, speaking into it:

COMMANDING OFFICER
We failed to stop him, here, unit B. Your shot.

BACK TO SCENE - BRIEF CUT

as the bus thunders forward, nearing the corner.

INSIDE THE BUS - MALLY - BRIEF CUT

Dazed, she lifts herself shakily to her knees...

MALLY
Did we make it???

ON SHOCKLEY - BRIEF CUT

Twisting the massive wheel as he negotiates the corner:

SHOCKLEY
Keep your ass on the floor!!!

CLOSE SHOT - BRIEF CUT

His foot slams down on the gas, and we NOTE that his trouser leg is sodden with blood, the accelerator slippery with it.

EXT. STREET #2

Apparently deserted, as was the prior street. But no. Here, a second battalion of police are deployed along the south side.

The bus heaves INTO VIEW.

INSIDE THE BUS

as Shockley sees the waiting policemen:

SHOCKLEY
(yells)
Geddown!!!

Mally hits the floor again.

EXT. STREET - HIGH ANGLE

as the second contingent of cops open fire with the force of a battleship's broadside, ripping into the "clean" flank of the charging, ROARING Scenicruiser.

VARIOUS CUTS - #2 GAUNTLET - SLOW MOTION

Bullets shattering every square inch of remaining glass...whining off the asphalt like metal hornets gone mad...the Greyhound's tires being shot to ribbons, blowing out in great plosive bursts... the heavy rims gouging brutal scars in the road as the bus rumbles onward. And the faces of the cops as they shoot -- teeth clenched - magnums bucking in their hands -- rifles kicking into shoulders -- firing round after round -- and one of them, a rookie, unaccountably weeping.

INSIDE THE BUS - ON SHOCKLEY

as a wild ricochet splatters against the interior of his turret. His face jerks as if with a charge of high voltage: red specks of blood popping out on his cheek and neck.

SHOCKLEY
Shit -- !!!

MALLY O.S.
(anguished)
BEN?????

SHOCKLEY
(shouting)
Shut up!!!

HIGH ANGLE - THE BUS

as -- half demolished but still moving -- it slows upon approaching the corner. Here, further barriers block all three avenues of escape: right, left, and dead ahead.

VARIOUS CUTS - 2ND POLICE BATTALION

as they run out of ammo and/or lose the range.

INSIDE THE BUS - ON SHOCKLEY

Wavering in the seat like a heavyweight who has taken a sudden left-and-right...his weakening hand finding only the strength to shove the gearshift into neutral.

EXT. THE BUS

It comes to a stop with a HISS of hydraulics.

SHOCKLEY

Half falls, half slides from the seat...crawls under the turret. Seeing the blood on his face, on his leg, Mally cries out.

SHOCKLEY
Take over...

MALLY
But --

SHOCKLEY
Drive this sucker!!!

Numbly, she obeys, crawling into the turret.

HER ANGLE - THE ACCELERATOR - BRIEF CUT

A veritable pool of blood surrounds the big pedal.

ON MALLY

Aghast.

MALLY
Oh, Christ!!!

SHOCKLEY
(through his pain)
Get moving!

MALLY
I don't know how to --

SHOCKLEY
Do what I tell you!!!

MALLY
(yelling)
Don't yell at me!!!

She pulls herself fiercely into the seat, wrenches the gear-shift as if to pull it from the transmission.

ON SHOCKLEY

Arduously tying his belt around the injured leg, a makeshift tourniquet.

MALLY O.S.
Which way do I turn?

SHOCKLEY
(gasping)
Left.

MALLY O.S.
There's a barrier!

SHOCKLEY
Screw the barrier!

The bus lurches forward with such ferocity that Shockley all but slides down the length of the aisle.

EXT. THE CORNER - LOW ANGLE

As the bus demolishes the barrier, sending the pieces flying like matchsticks.

ON MALLY

Gripping the wheel, actually driving the goddam thing.

SHOCKLEY O.S.
What do you see straight ahead?

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

CAMERA ZOOMS UP AND IN on the building that reposes squarely at the end of the block: the towering spire of City Hall.

BACK TO MALLY

As -- seeing something else -- her terror sucks the color from her cheeks:

MALLY
Ben!!!!!

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

At the flight of steps at the base of City Hall, a third battalion of cops guard the access to the building. They bristle with guns.

BACK TO MALLY

MALLY
Oh, my Christ, Ben! More! More cops! At the base of the stairs! Straight ahead -- '''

ON THE BUS

rumbling forward toward the horde of police.

INT. BUS - ON SHOCKLEY

shouting to Mally behind the turret:

SHOCKLEY
Keep it in gear and hit the deck!!!

ON THE COPS

as their C.O. barks through a bullhorn:

C.O.

OPEN FIRE!

VARIOUS CUTS - POLICE

They direct a brutal stream of gunfire directly at the front of the onrushing bus.

QUICK CUT - INSIDE BLAKELOCK'S OFFICE - BLAKELOCK

He stares out the window in catatonic disbelief as the final fusillade erupts from the base of the building, directly below.

His face is fucking white. Whirling, he rushes out.

OUTSIDE CITY HALL - THE BUS

A roaring wreck, a dying juggernaut, it ploughs into the hellish curtain of gunfire.

INSIDE THE BUS - MALLY

Crouching behind the steering wheel, within the turret, she depresses the gas pedal with her hand as bullets whine and spatter.

EXT. THE BUS

Its fusellage peppered with buckshot, cratered with bullet-holes, it rumbles forward on its rims...steam pouring from a multitude of apertures as momentum decreases...its windows long-since gone, the SOUNDS of its decelleration a grotesque assortment of mechanical complaint. Only now...finally...literally shot to death... with one last terminal rattle of its engine it grinds to a total stop directly at the base of the wide marble stairs.

ON THE COPS

They cease firing, guns poised and silent in their hands. Suspiciously, they survey the lifeless metal hulk.

No sound emanates from within.

A total and unearthly silence settles on those gathered.

HOLD.

Now CAMERA PANS AWAY to the route from whence the bus had come. Watching, we SEE the first of the policemen whom the bus had left behind, two streets back, at the very beginning of the gauntlet.

In twos and threes, some running, some walking, some in cars, they silently begin to arrive, converging.

ON THE BUS

Straddling the curb. A mutilated wreck.

ON THE COPS

PANNING SHOT encompasses their faces, their mute expressions ranging from awe and horror to a metaphysical mistrust.

ON THE BUS

Motionless. Noiseless. And then --

SHOCK CUT - THE FRONT DOOR

With a hiss, it opens.

VARIOUS CUTS - POLICE

Tensed, guns trained on the open Scenicruiser door.

MED. FULL SHOT - THE DOOR

Something moves within the bus.

CLOSE SHOT

LENS TIGHT on the three interior steps immediately inside the bus's door as Shockley's foot takes the first downward stride, INTO VIEW.

We SEE the makeshift tourniquet, the trouser-leg dark and sopping with blood...the bloodied shoe...

OUTSIDE THE BUS - A COP

Magnum in both hands, he levers back the hammer. It CLICKS resoundingly in the silence.

AT THE BUS

as Shockley's full figure comes INTO VIEW in the bus's doorway: a gruesome, debilitated spectre of a man. His face is half-covered with blood from small wounds -- the effect of bullet-fragments. The blood has dripped unstaunched down the front of his shirt. His face is a ghastly, sunken-eyed white -- the result of sheer physical trauma. It defies imagination that a human being could absorb such punishment, and survive.

Pausing briefly -- pistol tucked into his waist -- he half-falls as he steps from the bus and onto the pavement: a living apparition.

In his hand he clutches a ragged, blood-soaked paper: the subpoena for one Gus Mally.

ON THE COPS

The limits to which the man has suffered are not lost on them. Subliminal is the knowledge that he is, after all, one of their own.

ON SHOCKLEY

No more than ten feet from the nearest of the cops, he releases his hand-hold on the bus's door...sways on his feet...turns stiffly back to the door and gallantly extends a hand.

Augustina Mally moves unsteadily INTO VIEW at the top of the steps. Glancing at the weapons trained on her -- the countless policemen watching -- she takes Shockley's hand and descends slowly from the bus.

Shockley's arm moves protectively around her shoulder as he raises the bloody subpoena for all to see.

SHOCKLEY
I'm delivering...a witness...to courtroom G.

ON THE COPS

CAMERA PANS their faces...HOLDING on a grim-faced veteran whose gun is leveled at Shockley's gut.

BACK TO SHOCKLEY & MALLY

For a moment the two of them just stand there, helpless, vulnerable, shell-shocked.

Then Shockley turns and -- arm in arm -- he and Mally start up the steps to City Hall.

ON THE COPS

Their guns tracking with the retreating couple. HOLD again on the veteran seen earlier. We SENSE the inner debate taking place.

And then, in a gesture that bespeaks the general mind, one of the Battalion Captains simply reaches out and with a finger lowers the Veteran's gun-barrel toward the ground.

ON SHOCKLEY & MALLY

HAND HELD CAMERA captures the ineffable, unbalanced efforts of the couple as they climb the marble stairs...unsteady...mechanical.. all but dropping to their knees.

ON THE COPS

CAMERA STARTS on the Veteran as he watches them retreat -- makes no further move to raise his gun. Slowly, ANGLE WIDENS to include another cop...and then another...and then, as ANGLE OPENS FURTHER... scores of them, all armed, young and old, of different races, different attitudes, until...as ANGLE NOW INCLUDES Shockley and Mally on their ascent to City Hall, there must be eighty policemen at the base of the steps: a tense, absolutely wordless convocation.

And not a shot is fired.

HOLD a very long moment, then --

CUT TO:

INT. CITY HALL -1ST FLOOR CORRIDOR - BLAKELOCK & FEYDERSPIEL

Motionless -- rooted to the floor immediately within the building -- they stare incredulously O.S.

BLAKELOCK
I don't believe it.

THEIR POV - THROUGH GLASS DOORS

We SEE Shockley and Mally laboriously ascending the steps.

BACK TO SCENE

Blakelock surges forward, Feyderspiel following.

BLAKELOCK
(enraged)
I gave orders! They're supposed to kill them!!! I told them -- !!!

OUTSIDE - ON THE STEPS - HIGH ANGLE

Shockley and Mally are within a single step of the facade when Blakelock cannons INTO VIEW through the doors, arms flailing madly as he hurtles down the steps, screaming at his motionless legions:

BLAKELOCK
Shoot! Shoot them! KILL THEM!!!

VARIOUS CUTS - COPS

Conflicted. Caught between their inherent sense of duty and the human compassion they instinctively feel for the helpless couple.

ON SHOCKLEY & MALLY

Frozen in place.

BACK TO SCENE

Blakelock careens through the ranks of police, pushing, shoving, gesturing --

BLAKELOCK
There!!! Shoot them! Shoot to kill! That's an order!!!

AT THE GLASS DOORS

as Feyderspiel steps outside, stunned at the spectacle.

QUICK CUT

In a blur of motion Shockley seizes him, pivots the attorney in a hammerlock to face the shocked and silent gathering below -- his magnum pressed against the startled man's jugular:

SHOCKLEY
Talk!

VARIOUS QUICK CUTS - POLICE, BLAKELOCK, FEYDERSPIEL ET AL.

Staring faces flood past LENS in a crazy-quilt pattern. In Feyderspiel's eyes there is a jagged unreality, a deadly and fragmented impression that his universe has lost its balance and begun to collapse upon itself.

The gun against his throat, Shockley all but pulls the man to his tiptoes.

SHOCKLEY
TALK!!! TELL THEM!!!

Panicked, his face turning purple from the force of Shockley's grip, the attorney chokes out words:

FEYDERSPIEL
It -- it was -- it was Blakelock -- !

SHOCKLEY
Blakelock what?!

FEYDERSPIEL
He set it up! The whole thing -- !

SHOCKLEY
SET UP WHAT??!!!!

BRIEF CUT - BLAKELOCK

Fairly screeching with frenzy -- barraging the police with manic commands to destroy all living things -- feet describing a desperate Mazurka.

BACK TO SCENE

FEYDERSPIEL
The cover-up -- !

SHOCKLEY
Cover-up of WHAT???!!!

FEYDERSPIEL
(a howl)
The DeLucca trial -- collusion with the mob -- you -- ! He set you up! The whole thing was his idea!

SHOCK CUT

With a CRY, Blakelock wrests a pistol from the nearest police-man, whirls and aims: BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

VARIOUS SHOTS - SLOW MOTION

For a protracted, nightmarish instant we SEE Feyderspiel's body jerk spasmodically with the impact of Blakelock's slugs. Killed at once, he slumps in Shockley's arms, exposing Shockley to Blakelock's final shot -- and Shockley takes it high in the chest. He and Feyderspiel topple to the stairs. With a scream, Mally throws herself atop Shockley's prostrate form, shielding his body with her own as she takes the magnum from his unmoving hand.

ON BLAKELOCK

Face twisted with psychotic rage, he trains his pistol on the girl and fires.

MALLY

Blakelock's bullets whine off the marble steps at her shoulder as she grips the gun with both slender hands and aims.

THE MAGNUM IN HER HANDS - SLOW MOTION

LARGE IN FRAME, the gun discharges, BOOMING like a Howitzer.

BLAKELOCK - SLOW MOTION

Hit, knocked backward by the impact of the bullet as he takes it in the gut.

MALLY - SLOW MOTION

The vengeance of the ages can be read on her face as the big pistol bucks and THUNDERS in her hands, still firing.

BLAKELOCK - SLOW MOTION

Yet on his feet -- the bullets ripping into him -- crimson gouts of blood erupting from his white linen shirt. His legs weak and rubbery, he back-pedals, veers, staggers downward, sideways...the look of a rabid animal fixed on his dying face. All the while, the pistol rises in his hand, gripped by a determination which has not yet been extinguished.

Aiming it with unerring accuracy at Mally's figure, he pulls the trigger.

And in a single, sly, sublime punctuation to all that such men stand for, to all that this man represents: the ultimate impotence of essence as well as attitude (and the fitting and proper parenthesis to a long-ago encounter with Mally herself) --

-- the hammer falls on an empty chamber.

ON MALLY

Triggering her final shot.

ON BLAKELOCK

The bullet hits him square in the face.

Still on his feet, he stares at her with a bizarre admixture of awe and betrayal -- finally crumpling in a heap at the base of the steps where he lies quite still.

Quite dead.

FULL HIGH ANGLE

The tableau.

And then:

MALLY & SHOCKLEY

as she drops the gun, turns to Shockley and caresses his shoulder...his cheek...his hair...her words tumbling out --

MALLY
Ben, oh, God, Ben, talk to me -- tell me you're alright, Ben -- I love you -- please -- oh, God, just tell me you're okay -- Ben? -- please -- !

The man does not respond.

Struck by a sudden bolt of fear, she stares in horror at his pale, battered face...

...and suddenly she shakes him, shouting at him...

MALLY
Goddamit, wake up! You hear me, Ben Shockley?! Don't you die on me, you crazy bastard! You hear me? I won't let you die, you sonofabitch! Wake up! Open your fucking eyes!!!

FAVORING SHOCKLEY

For a long moment there is no response.

Then, gradually, like a man summoned back from the brink, his eyes flutter open, meet Mally's. There they hold.

Of all those present, only she is close enough to hear his half-whispered endearment:

SHOCKLEY
...nag, nag, nag...

And, sobbing with relief, with gratitude, she clutches him to her.

FADE OUT

THE END